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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN MOORE, M.D.

VOL. IV.

THE

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OF

JOHN MOORE, M.D.

WITH

MEMOIRS

OF

HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,

BY

ROBERT ANDERSON, M.D.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

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A

VIEW

OF THE

CAUSES AND PROGRESS

OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

Opus opimum casibus, atrox prœliis, discors seditionibus, ipsa etiam pace sævum. TACIT.

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TO HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

MY LORD DUKE,

It is very difficult to write on the subject of the French Revolution without being accused of partiality. I endeavoured to avoid that imputation in my Journal; but a very near connection of yours told me, that, when she was abroad, those who are called *Democrates*, and had read the book, declared that, with other faults, it had an intolerable leaning towards aristocracy. Those, on the other hand, who are denominated *Aristocrates*, were of opinion, that its greatest fault was a strong bias to democracy. In the writer's mind, however, there is no more inclination to either than is to be found in the Constitution of Great Britain, as it was established by the efforts of your Grace's ancestor, in conjunction with those of other patriots, at the Revolution in the year 1688. The present work has been executed in the same disposition, and will be exposed to the same censure.

At a period when prejudices operate with unusual acrimony; when, merely from viewing a particular object in different lights, two sets of men in this country reciprocally accuse each other of designs, of which, I am convinced,

neither are capable; when that spirit of hatred which alienated the minds of men from their countrymen, and even relations, on account of a difference of religious opinions, about the middle of the sixteenth century, seems to revive on account of political ones at the end of the eighteenth; at such a time, the qualities of moderation, of candour, and benevolence, under the direction of a good understanding and scrupulous integrity, derive uncommon lustre from their uncommon rarity. This consideration induced me to address the following Work to your Grace. I remain, my Lord Duke, your most obedient and obliged humble servant,

J. MOORE.

Clifford Street,
May 6, 1795.

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A

VIEW

OF THE

CAUSES AND PROGRESS

OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER I.

The Resources of France—Henry IV—Lewis XIV—The Love of our Country—Loyalty—The Regent—Lewis XV.

The present revolution in France is one of the most awful events of which history affords any record.

The crimes with which it has been accompanied will remain a stain on the national character, which all the perseverance and intrepidity with which France has repelled external attack cannot efface.

The misery which the revolution has already produced, is of a nature so extensive and so acute, as no rational hope of future prosperity can compensate.

The only way we have to judge of the probability of what is to happen, is by reflecting on what has happened; and the surest means of avoiding evil of any kind is by discovering the causes which lead to it.

To enumerate some of the circumstances which tended to hasten, and are reckoned among the remote causes of the French revolution, may be useful.

Many imagine, that it will be a very long time before the finances of France can recover the extraordinary

drains they have of late undergone; it must be remembered, however, that her resources are prodigious, of which nothing can afford more convincing proofs than the rapidity with which, on former occasions, she acquired riches and prosperity, after being exhausted by civil dissensions or foreign wars.

She revived from all the disasters of the bloody civil war of the league, with wonderful quickness, and acquired new dignity and unprecedented prosperity under Henry IV.

A very short time after the civil dissensions and war of the Fronde, her greatness and wealth excited the jealousy, and resisted the force, of several powerful states which combined against her.

The sudden recovery from the disastrous condition to which France was reduced at the two epochs above mentioned, was partly owing to the talents of the two princes who reigned immediately after them.

The first, being blessed with benevolence and genius, had at once the inclination to raise his country from the calamitous state in which she was, and the power to execute it—he was in reality a great king.

The second has been called the best actor of a great king that ever lived.

The fine person, dignified deportment, and imposing manners of Lewis XIV commanded the admiration, and even the awe, of his generals, ministers, and courtiers; and towards the end of his reign, when he was at once assailed by domestic and public misfortunes, the attachment of his subjects seemed to make them feel the sorrows of their king as their own, and submit with alacrity to heavier exactions than were ever wrung by tyranny from men.

Mankind are governed by force and by opinion. Lewis made use of both these agents in a supreme degree. Besides the immense army which he kept up, in peace as well as war, he also kept in action all those springs which have been found friendly to the maintenance of implicit

obedience in the subject, and arbitrary power in the monarch. By various means he kept his nobility entirely dependent on his favour. Jealous of allowing the princes of the blood occasions of acquiring military fame, he seldom gave them the command of armies, and never for a long time. He commanded in person only when conquest was secure; and without being exposed to hardship or danger, he claimed the merit of having reduced every fortress, which was either bought by his money, or subdued by the skill of his engineers: even in his cabinet at Versailles he affected to direct the operations of his generals in the field, and vainly expected that, *their* victories being imputed to *his* military skill, the greater share of the glory would remain with himself.

He was taught that he had a right to controul the consciences and seize the money of his subjects; and, as he was at once superstitious and haughty, he revived the spirit of persecution, partly from zeal for the religion which he himself professed, and partly to punish the arrogance of those who dared to entertain opinions different from his.

Compensating the difference in quantity by that of quality, he seems to have thought himself and family, including his illegitimate children, of more value than all his subjects together.

Other monarchs have rated themselves and subjects in the same manner; but Lewis XIV is perhaps the only king who ever brought his subjects to the same way of thinking. He and his glory occupied their thoughts more than their own welfare, or that of their country. Those endearing ideas, which are connected with the expression *our country*, roused his jealousy: at least, pains were taken, in his time, to root them out of their native soil, and transplant them around the word *King*: the expression *la Patrie* fell out of use during his reign, and continued so for a long time afterwards;—*le Roi* supplied its place.

That men should reverence the chief magistrate of a

constitution, where power is limited and prerogative ascertained, is highly rational and becoming; that subjects should admire a great king, and love a benevolent one, is natural and just. The heart owns, and the understanding approves, those sentiments. There is nothing in them, however, to fire the imagination, or greatly to captivate the affections. But the expression *native country* presents itself to the mind, decorated with many ideas from the wardrobe of imagination. To tell men they have disgraced their country, is the most bitter of all reproaches; to say that they have done it honour, is the most soothing of all praises. The officer on the day of battle is sensible of this; and that he may inspire those under his command with additional courage, and rouse them to the utmost efforts, he reminds them that *they are fighting for their country.* That simple sentence contains all the magic of eloquence. Conjuring up the ideas of protecting our property, our homes, the abodes of our forefathers, the beloved scenes of our earliest pleasures and first affections, it implies defending from outrage our constitution, our religion, all that is valuable and endearing, our friends, parents, wives, and children. The love of our country is mentioned with the love of fame by the Roman poet, as the feeling of a noble mind.—

'Vincit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cupido.'

It not only excites to virtuous exertions during life, but a soothing recollection in death.—

'——— dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos.'

The Romans, fond of fighting as they were, would not have unsheathed a sword for the greatest man their country ever produced, if he had insinuated that they were to fight for *his* glory, and not for their country.

But the French, in Lewis XIV's time, seem to have thought of nothing but the monarch. When a battle was lost, their greatest concern was the affliction it would occasion to him—they rejoiced in victory, because it would afford him pleasure, and increase his glory. The great empire of France, *and all which it inherit,* seemed to have

been concentrated in the person of the grand monarque—as if there had been a general conviction of the absurd doctrine, that the people were made for the king, and not the king for the people; which has a bad effect on the minds of both, rendering the one more proud, and the other more servile.

This was the case in France during the reign of this arrogant monarch, whose affected grandeur imposed on the whole nation; and who, whether he was a hero in the eyes of his valet de chambre or not, certainly was admired as a great monarch, even by the truly great men of his own time. His generals talked of the honour of shedding their blood for his glory. The proudest of his nobility solicited offices, some of them almost menial, near his person; and the great Condé himself dwindled into a mere courtier, to satisfy the vanity of the inflated monarch.

Considerations of policy and selfishness intermingled, in these instances, with that foolish wonder with which the nation at that time looked up to their monarch; the generals probably thought a little of commands and regiments, the courtiers of places and pensions, and the prince of mitigating that jealousy which, he well knew, Lewis bore him. It is impossible to imagine, that they had any affectionate attachment to his person.

How could a reserved, yet ostentatious tyrant, who continually sacrificed the feelings of all around him to his own caprice and conveniency, excite affectionate attachment?

A king of such a character as Henry IV would certainly carry men a great length in the most cordial loyalty; but let those who wish to embody patriotism, and many of the sentiments which beautify and harmonize society, with whoever inherits the office of king, recollect the characters of all Henry's successors, except the last; let them also reflect, that if Lewis XV had died before his marriage, then all the loyalty of the French nation, with all the duty and affection which belong to it, and that ardour to shed their blood for their king's glory, which the

French of those days were so fond of professing, would have been the lawful inheritance of Philip Egalité.

The impression which the long reign of Lewis XIV made on the minds of his subjects, continued during the government of the regent, whose character and conduct were in many respects the reverse. Naturally of a compassionate disposition, and a lover of justice, if wishes could have done it, he would have made the people happy; but indolence and the inordinate pursuit of pleasure prevented him from the exertions necessary for that purpose, or from controlling the conduct of unfeeling and rapacious ministers.

Endowed with courage and wit, he despised, as dull and superfluous, the formalities which politicians have found useful in government; he scorned that affected dignity and reserve, by which imbecility so often gains respect, and ignorance is so often concealed; and falling into the opposite extreme, he introduced a laxity of manners, which rejected all the restraints of polished society, wounded decency, and revived that profligacy which had been banished from the court of France since the days of Catharine of Medicis and her son Henry III.

Nothing can be a stronger proof of the submissive spirit which prevailed at this period in France, than that the same system of government continued, in spite of the wanton imprudence of the regent, the fraudulent scheme by which so many thousand individuals were ruined, and the despicable character and nauseous manners of his prime minister, who was at once a disgrace to the priesthood, to the nation, and even to the court.

Instead of wishing for any alteration in their government, the French of those days were proud of the unlimited nature of their monarchy, *with all its crimes broad-blown;* and, after they had despaired of the regent, they centered their hopes of a redress of grievances in the young prince, who had now attained the age at which he could assume the government.

No maxim of holy writ seems to have made less impres-

sion on mankind than this, *Put not your trust in Princes.* In spite of their numerous disappointments, the highest expectations are always formed by the populace of the heir-apparent of the throne. History hardly makes mention of one who died young, who is not said to have possessed all the virtues of humanity. Of how many Marcelli have we heard, each more blooming than the other, whose wonderful spring of talents promised the most astonishing harvest! Even the moster Caligula was, when a boy, the favourite of the Roman army; and if, for the good of mankind, he had died then, the world would probably have been told by some poet or historian, that he was just shewn to the earth,* which being unworthy of him, he was soon carried to heaven. If, however, among those born the immediate heirs of empire, so many are endowed in this extraordinary manner, whose virtues would add splendour to the throne, and diffuse happiness among their subjects, how infinitely is it to be lamented, that *they* should be so early cut off, rather than their survivors!

Many circumstances united in Lewis XV to conciliate the affections and raise the hopes of the nation.

He was the only child of the virtuous duke of Burgundy (the pupil of Fenelon) and Adelaide of Savoy, whose playful character is painted in such amiable colours by the writers of that age. The duke fell a sacrifice to the grief he felt for the untimely death of this princess; and the loss of both filled France, not only with that external mourning which is equally worn for princes at whose death the public rejoice, as for those they lament, but also with *real* sorrow.

The young king possessed likewise all the charms of comeliness of countenance and symmetry of person: to these the people added, of course, all the best qualities of the head and heart.

Whatever share of the latter he had was soon rendered useless by indolence, and perverted by the corruptions of

* Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata.

a court. He possessed not, like his great-grandfather, that lofty reserve, which keeps men at too great a distance to judge of the real worth of the object they contemplate.—With more weaknesses to conceal, he had less the power of concealing them; and the more the man was seen, the less was the monarch esteemed.

He appeared at the head of his armies, without endeavouring to acquire any knowledge in the art of war. *They* gained victories, and his general had the glory.

In peace, he became devoted to an artful woman, who governed the state with as unlimited sway, as his general had done the army. Even when she had lost the charms by which his affections had been seduced; abandoning his person to others, she kept what she most valued in the connection, by maintaining her power until her death.

She who succeeded the marchioness of Pompadour, as the acknowledged mistress of Lewis XV, was not so haughty and ambitious as her predecessor.

Intermeddling less with the affairs of state, she was at more pains to amuse and entertain her lover. With all her good-humour and gaiety, she found it impossible, however, entirely to ward off the tedium to which a vacant mind is peculiarly exposed.

Although no man was ever more oppressed with mental indolence than Lewis XV, he was fond to excess of bodily exercise, and passed great part of his time in hunting, from which he derived the double advantage of repelling the intrusions of reflection, and obtaining sleep.

The wretched monarch was relieved from the burden of existence, by a disease which he had taken great pains to avoid through the whole of his past life, and which he caught wantonly in his old age.* He died a memorable proof, that the united advantages of external gracefulness, riches, high birth, quickness of apprehension, and even

* Lewis XV died at the age of sixty-five, of the small pox, which he caught from a young woman, on whom that disease appeared soon after she had been with the king.

benevolence, cannot preclude tedium or misery, and secure public esteem to those whose minds are incapable of laudable exertion.

The death of this prince, who at the beginning of his reign had received the appellation of *Lewis the Well-Beloved*, was heard at Paris with satisfaction rather than sorrow.

It had been the custom, in times of public danger, to make a procession of the shrine of St. Genevieve, the patroness of that city, in the hopes that by the saint's intercession the threatened calamity might be averted. This ceremony was performed during the last illness of Lewis XV. He expired notwithstanding. When his death was announced in a certain company, one observed that the procession of the shrine seemed to have lost its efficacy. 'What happier effect could it have produced,' said another, '*Is he not dead?*'

CHAPTER II.

Lewis XVI—Diffusion of Knowledge—Of Riches—The Bourgeoisie of France—The Ancient Noblesse—The Modern—The Courtiers—The Queen—American War—Abolition of Household Troops—German Discipline—Practice and Theory.

It was not possible for the personal character of the king to be seen, during the greater part of a long reign, in this degrading point of view, without diminishing, in a considerable degreee, the national veneration for royalty.

At the accession of Lewis XVI, however, the public opinion seemed to have a tendency to return to its ancient bias. In the candour, affability, and love of justice, which appeared in the young king, the nation found a resemblance with the character of its last Henry, whose memory was cherished with filial veneration.

The young queen united in her person many qualities, which might have been expected to render her popular in any country, but peculiarly so in France—beauty, good-

humour, gaiety, and a great desire of pleasing; preferring affability to etiquette, and the manners of the nation to which she had come, to those of that which she had left; and forming a bond of union between the two, which promised a termination to long rivalship, and a commencement of mutual support and prosperity.

Those circumstances certainly had a tendency to remove the impressions which the conduct of Lewis XV might have made, and to revive the languishing loyalty of the nation.

At this time, however, the spirit of philosophical discussion prevailed very much in France. The English writers on the subject of government were more read and relished than they had ever been before. The works of Montesquieu, Rousseau, Raynal, were universally admired.

Many old prejudices, hurtful to society, though supported by the self-interest of a few, and the ignorance of the multitude, were combated by the authors above mentioned, and others. The writings of Voltaire, distinguished for wit, and a happiness of expression which baffles imitation, contributed more than all the rest to form the taste and bias the opinions of the age. They were more universally read than the works of any other author; because, to borrow the words of one who knew him well, they possessed 'le précieux avantage d'être toujours clair et simple, sans jamais être insipide, et d'être lu avec un égal plaisir, et par le peuple des lectures et par l'elite des philosophes.'*

While the edge of his ridicule is turned against persecution and hypocrisy, the most virtuous applaud: but Voltaire was not a believer in Christianity—that was his misfortune; but it cannot excuse his attempts to turn into ridicule the established religion of his country. One among many peculiarities of this author is, that he treats Christianity with becoming respect in his dramas, and

* The precious advantage of being always clear and simple, without ever being insipid, and of being read with equal pleasure by a person of plain common sense and by a philosopher.

that some of his plays are at once the most moral and religious of his works.

The Encyclopædia, that great monument of universal science, was finished about this period. The avowed object of this work was the promotion of general knowledge, and men distinguished in every branch of science had been employed in it; but what some of the principal undertakers are supposed to have had chiefly in view, was to promulgate certain free notions on the subjects of government and religion, in which there is no doubt they succeeded, not only in France but in other countries of Europe.

As by these means, and the increasing commerce of the nation, literature and riches became more diffused among the middle and inferior orders of society, many ancient prejudices were weakened and effaced. That haughty superiority, which the meanest of the noblesse assumed over their fellow-citizens, became more intolerable to the bourgeoisie than before: what had been submitted to by men when poor and ignorant, was not so easily brooked by the same class when they found themselves richer, and thought themselves wiser, than many of those who were ranked their superiors.

That Russian, Polish, and Bohemian peasants, who are attached to the lands, and have no means of improving either their minds or fortunes, should continue to bear insult and oppression from those whom they look up to as superior beings, is not wonderful: neither is it surprising that the Turks continue slaves, because what knowledge exists among them belongs to their rulers: but if a gradual progression of industry and knowledge takes place in that part of any nation which is most oppressed, while dissipation and effeminacy prevail in that part which is most privileged, a speedy revolution in such a nation may with certainty be predicted.

This alteration had, in a great measure, taken place in France. The better sort of the bourgeoisie had gained what a great portion of the noblesse had lost; and that

elevation of mind, sense of honour, and spirit of enterprise, which in the days of yore belonged exclusively to the latter, was now extended, in a great degree, to the former.

A claim of superiority is irksome to many people, even when they are conscious that the claimant excels them in natural qualities and attainments. A considerable degree of deference, however, will be spontaneously paid to these, by the best part of mankind, and will be greatly increased, wherever to such attainments the circumstance of high birth is added; but a continued assumption of superiority in those who are inferior in every praiseworthy quality except that of birth, is always felt with indignation and treated with contempt, when the open display of that sentiment is not restrained by interested motives.

In ancient times, the power of the state and the whole spirit of the French armies depended on the noblesse, as gallant a class of men as the world ever produced. The Greek and Roman histories exhibit not brighter examples of generous intrepidity than the annals of France. The noblesse therefore were at once respected by the sovereign and by the people.

But because a race of men, distinguished for the virtues of the age in which they lived, who were always foremost in the ranks of battle, their sons fighting by their sides, were respected and admired, and had privileges granted to them, does it follow, it was asked, that the same are due to men bred in effeminate luxury, distinguished for their follies and debasing amusements, who, childishly fond of the trappings of a soldier and the pomp of war, shrink from its real dangers, and are equally devoid of the hardihood of ancient times, and of taste for the elegance of modern refinement?

The following is the description which Montesquieu gives of that part of the nobility of France which formed the court.—

' L'ambition dans l'oisivité, la bassesse dans l'orgueil,

le desir de s'enricher sans travail, l'aversion pour la verité, la flatterie, la trahison, la perfidie, l'abandon de tous ses engagemens, le mépris des devoirs du citoyen, la crainte de la vertu du prince, l'esperance de ses foiblesses, et, plus que tout cela, le ridicule perpetuel jetté sur la vertu, forment, je crois, le caractere du plus grand nombre des courtisans.' *

The general alteration of manners which Europe has sustained of late, produced, in the opinion of many of their countrymen, a most striking alteration in the character of the noblesse of France. The opportunities of distinguishing themselves in the field more rarely occurred; and when they did, it was generally in distant climates, to which those of the higher rank seldom like to go, and therefore are not sent. Riches and promotion at home were obtained by court intrigue more than military merit, or merit of any kind; and the favours of the crown, being too often distributed by the princes, by their minions and their mistresses, occasioned much indignation. Many of the noblesse, who came from the distant provinces, were treated so superciliously by the assiduous and favoured courtiers at Versailles, that they were greatly disgusted with the present system, and as ardently desired a change in it as any roturier in the nation. Many officers of the army, after having long served abroad, when they came to Versailles, found their services forgotten; and the neglect which they experienced was rendered more poignant by the attention which they saw paid to courtiers, such as Montesquieu describes.

This accounts for the cold support which, at the beginning of the revolution, the king and the court party received from some of the nobility, and a considerable number of the officers of the army.

* Ambition with indolence; meanness with pride; desire of enriching themselves without labour; aversion for truth; flattery, perfidy; contempt for the duty of a citizen; fear of the virtues of their sovereign, and hope from his foibles; and, above all, a continual attempt to turn virtue into ridicule, form the character of the majority of courtiers.

At the same time the conduct and deportment of the queen were different from what long-established forms dictated. So far from wishing to impress a continual recollection of the distance between herself and the courtiers, that distance was to her irksome. Her natural impressions as a woman had more influence on her conduct, than the artificial deportment dictated to her as a queen. She loved to descend from the throne, that she might enjoy the comfort of society. However necessary the pomp of etiquette and the frigidity of reserve may be to high-born dulness and insipid vanity, they were tasteless and fatiguing to a beautiful and lively woman, inspired with the desire, and conscious of the power, of pleasing. Her heart delighted in the confidences of friendship, and preferred that style of society where there was at least an appearance of equality. She gradually introduced, therefore, a familiarity of intercourse between the king and subject, unknown before at the court of Versailles.

There are people however in every court who, being conscious that they can derive importance or attention from no source but that of birth, are infinitely observant of the degrees of rank, and anxious that each individual should receive the precise portion of respect to which birth gives him a claim; but while the various gradations and shades of heraldry were distinctly perceived by many persons of this description, the daughter of Maria Theresa was by birth raised so high above them all, that to her they all seemed on a level. She distinguished people by a different criterion—as they seemed to be more or less accomplished or agreeable; and by this means mortally offended many illustrious persons of both sexes, who had no pretensions of that nature.

The king and queen not only gave frequent private entertainments, but accepted of them from the princes and other persons of the court; and each of them had occasionally parties, without the other being invited. The queen, who was much fonder of such entertainments than her husband, had often private suppers, with dancing,

where deep play was allowed, and where the usual topics of Parisian conversation, with all the vivacity and freedom of the Parisian societies, took place.

This did not exist long without malignant interpretation. Those who loved etiquette, and derived what distinction was shewn them from it; those who were left out of the queen's parties; the prudes and duennas of the court were offended. Had the queen been better able to support the languor of pomp and the slavery of etiquette, the eye of suspicion would have been lulled or kept at a distance, the tongue of slander overawed; and the gloom of formality, removing all idea of pleasure, would have given the court the appearance of more righteousness, by being less gay.

In a beautiful, sprightly, and unguarded woman *calumny* found an easy prey; and afterwards being united with *sedition*, they made a joint attack on the queen, with a view not only to injure her, but to debase the king, and vilify royalty itself in the eyes of the people.

Reports and insinuations of the vilest nature were circulated by many who did not believe them, and believed by many more on no better grounds than that they were often repeated; and she, who, for the reasons above mentioned, seemed destined to give lasting peace and prosperity to France, was, by malignity in conjunction with sedition, represented as the cause of public misery, and the determined enemy of the country.

The ostentatious and far more expensive magnificence of Lewis XIV, although perhaps it would have been censured in Lewis XVI, yet could not have raised more indignation than that species of profusion which the latter, contrary to his own taste, permitted, in compliance with that of those around him.

The magnificent palaces, extensive gardens, and numerous retinue, belonging to the former, could afford, it may be thought, as little enjoyment to a peasant or manufacturer in the provinces of France, as the petites soupés at Trianon or the bals masqués of St. Cloud; he

might also be assured, that the one as much as the other was at the expense of his labour and the sweat of his brow. Still he had a pride in hearing, that *his* king had finer palaces and gardens than any king in Europe; whereas he felt mortified in hearing, that a parcel of worthless courtiers were banqueting at his expense, while he could with difficulty procure brown bread for himself and his family.—What the court of Versailles may perhaps have gained in enjoyment, by the rejection of etiquette and the introduction of ease and familiarity, it lost in that admiration, which solemnity, ceremony, and distance, excite in the minds of the people. Objects in general appear smaller, in proportion to the distance at which they are placed; but the reverse is often the case, in contemplating those who are vulgarly called the great. The degree to which some of them dwindle, when brought nearer and viewed with precision, is wonderful.

Some of the princes of the blood, who were not judicious in the choice of their companions, *losing their princely privilege with vile participation*, contributed greatly to lower that sense of awe and respect for royalty, which it is of so much importance to preserve in all countries whose government is monarchical.

The expensive dissipation of the court, and of the Comte d'Artois in particular, has been greatly exaggerated; but although that, taken at the highest calculation, could contribute little to the diminution of the public treasure, it contributed more to the puplic discontent than much deeper sources of expense would have done: a single year, for example, of an unjust and unnecessary war would have cost the French nation much more money, and probably a great deal of blood, and yet the court might have been allowed to commence it, without exciting any murmurs.

The part which France took in support of American independence unquestionably hastened the French revolution. In America many French officers caught republican sentiments and principles, which at their return

spread with the rapidity of a new fashion all over France. The sentiments of loyalty became every day cooler in the breasts of Frenchmen; they began to value popularity and the huzzas of the mob more than the smiles of the sovereign; political clubs were established as in England; the conduct of government was canvassed in coffee-houses; and the Palais Royal, without ceasing to be the rendezvous of profligacy, became also the focus of sedition.

The cabinet of Versailles expected, no doubt, that, without weakening France, the assistance given to America would greatly impoverish England. The effect has turned out otherwise; that measure, without much affecting the riches of England, has made France *poor indeed.*

The abolition of the household troops of France may also be reckoned among the remote causes of the revolution. The crown was by that measure deprived at once of a great support and a considerable source of splendour. It is absurd to imagine, that the people can abstract the impression made on their minds by the magnificence which they are accustomed to see accompany their king, from what they owe to his rank and personal qualities: diminish the first, and they will think more slightingly of the two others. This ill-judged reform, therefore, while it lessened the veneration of the subjects for their sovereign, overspread the provinces with discontented gentlemen, and converted those who at Versailles would have remained submissive servants, into acrimonious censurers at Paris.

It is impossible for any government to support itself long, after a great majority of the governed are of opinion, that it is unjust and oppressive, and wish for an alteration.

This opinion had gained so much among people of all conditions in France, with respect to *their* government, that it would have been wise in the administration to have acquiesced in the wishes of the people, by forming some

moderate and prudent plan of reformation. Some things, for example, which had been thought proper and becoming at the time they were established, but by a change of manners and other circumstances were now considered as ridiculous, oppressive, and odious, might have been abolished gradually, with such efficacy as entirely to preclude, or greatly diminish, the probability of any of those rapid and violent revolutions, which are never effected without bloodshed and injustice.

But this measure of abolising the household troops, and thereby so considerably lessening the influence and obscuring the lustre of the crown, seems so violent, that it is difficult to conceive how it could have been adopted by any minister, however fond of public freedom, who was at the same time a friend to monarchy in France.

The introduction of the German custom of punishing the soldiers by blows, as it disgusted the men, and led to that defection which afterwards appeared in the troops, has also been thought to have contributed to the revolution. This kind of punishment certainly occasioned great desertion when first introduced, not only among the private soldiers, but also among the serjeants and corporals; for it was thought debasing to those who were ordered to inflict it, as well as to those on whom it was inflicted. Punishment is peculiarly necessary to keep those who have arms in their hands in due order and obedience; but when permitted to be arbitrarily inflicted by men often under the influence of passion, it cannot appear so just, nor have so good an effect, as when appointed by a cool and impartial court-martial.

One would naturally imagine that the practice of caning has a tendency to break the spirits of soldiers, and to make them think meanly of their profession; and it can hardly be conceived, that to keep men's minds under the continual impression of fear is a likely means of inspiring them with courage. But we have been told with peculiar emphasis of late, that what seems excellent in theory is absurd in practice; and that many things which are very

horrid to the mind to contemplate beforehand, are, notwithstanding, very advantageous when put in practice. From the frequent repetition of this observation, and the manner in which it is applied, one would almost suspect that the following are meant to be recommended as axioms.—

1. We ought to avoid every new measure which, to our feeble and circumscribed understandings, seems likely to produce a good effect.

2. Although a measure, from apparent absurdity and the cruelty requisite in the execution, revolts at once the head and the heart, it is not rashly to be rejected on that account, as it may be attended with considerable advantages notwithstanding.

3. With regard to the practice of caning soldiers, as it has been of late entirely banished from the French armies, that circumstance is sufficient of itself to determine a prudent and humane general to adopt it, and order the soldiers to be caned with more zeal than ever, that he may not be accused of imitating the French.

The same train of reasoning goes to prove, that the patriotism which actuated many Frenchmen at the beginning of the revolution, and the efforts they made to reform abuses and obtain a free constitution, having failed of success, ought to serve as a warning to mankind never to make a similar attempt again; but rather to combine in establishing despotic governments of Herculean force to crush the hydra of democracy wherever she tries to rear her savage heads. And as the spirit of freedom in France has been perverted to the most wicked purposes, by a set of the most abominable men that ever the earth produced, therefore the spirit of passive obedience and slavish submission should alone be cherished in every country, and honoured by every government, for the tranquillity of the human race. And, completely to secure the peace and prosperity of the governing power in all nations, which is the chief object of government, it would be expedient to grant it the power, in times of alarm, to oblige all sus-

pected persons to wear fetters, since nobody can deny the wisdom and justice of putting madmen and murderers in chains.

Another circumstance which had considerable influence in hastening, and much more in perverting, the revolution in France, was the fixing on Versailles as the place for the states-general to meet at. Although it was impossible to foresee all the mischief which has arisen from that measure, it might naturally have occurred, that an assembly which, it was supposed, was to act with freedom and independence, would have been placed with more propriety at a greater distance from the populous and turbulent city of Paris.

This is so evident, that many have thought it could not escape M. Necker; yet he first advised the king to convoke the assembly at Paris, and did not propose Versailles, until he found the king and the ministers positively against that measure; and as it is not easy to assign a good reason for this, it has been imputed to M. Necker's fondness for popular applause, and to his thinking, that the more evident his popularity was, the greater would be his influence with the assembly. He little thought, that the very scheme which he formed for the augmentation of his own influence was, in a short time, to be a principal cause of the annihilation, not only of his influence, but of the influence of reason, justice, and humanity, and of subjugating the national assembly, and the nation itself, to the most dreadful tyranny that ever oppressed mankind.

It may be thought improper to mention the arbitrary nature of the French government as a cause of the revolution, because it has subsisted many years, and because it subsists still in other countries where no revolution has taken place: but *that* may prove a powerful cause in certain situations, which would have remained inactive in others; in no other nation do the circumstances above enumerated occur in addition to their arbitrary government, nor did they ever before occur in France.

Perhaps all those causes together would not have produced the revolution, without the calling together of the states-general: and notwithstanding the greatness of the deficit, it is the opinion of some, that this measure might have been eluded. However that may be, the disorder in the French finances was so great, some time before the year 1789, that the imposition of very considerable additional taxes was thought the only effectual remedy; but as the people thought themselves already overloaded, and were in a state of mutinous discontent, the application of this remedy required prudence and delicacy.

CHAPTER III.

The Notables—M. de Calonne—The Clergy—The Archbishop of Toulouse Minister—Abbe Vermon—A Bed of Justice—Parliament of Paris refuse to register the King's Edicts—Parliament banished—Duke of Orleans—Two Counsellors of the Parliament sent to Prison.

It had been long the usage for the parliament of France to register every new imposition. The tax was indeed not considered legal by the people till the registration had taken place: and it sometimes happened, that, instead of obeying the edict, the parliament made a remonstrance, pointing out the hardship or impropriety of the tax, and praying the king to reconsider or withdraw it.

So much the kings of France themselves admitted that the parliament had a right to do; but having made the remonstrance, it was insisted that the parliamentary function was completed, and it remained with the king to give what weight to it he pleased. If he still insisted on the tax, it was then the duty of the parliament to register without farther resistance, on a letter from the king, called Lettre de Jussion, being addressed to them.

The friends of prerogative asserted, that this registration of taxes was a mere matter of form, and that the king's edict gave them all their efficacy, independent of

that ceremony; whereas others contended, that no tax could be legally levied till it had received the sanction of parliament.

The spirit of whig and tory had this extent and no more in France, before the American war; but soon after that period the spirit of the first became much more ardent and encroaching.

In times of difficulty, when new taxes were absolutely necessary, and yet ministers were afraid to impose them, it had on various occasions been found necessary to summon the states-general (les etats generaux), and leave it to them to point out the properest method of imposing and levying the necessary taxes.

Les etats generaux are an assembly consisting of deputies from the three orders of citizens in France,—namely, the nobility, the clergy, and the tiers etat; the last implies all the citizens of France who are neither of the nobility nor clergy.

The measure of summoning the states-general was much talked of at the time when M. de Calonne was controller general of the finances; but it required much prudence and circumspection on his part before he decided how to act in the present circumstances.

When moderate reforms only are required in a government with which the people in general are well satisfied, the sooner they are made the better; because they prevent the progress of discontent, and may be made without risk: but when great abuses have taken place, when the people are highly discontented, and demand important changes, at the very time that there is a necessity to impose new taxes, it is difficult to know how to proceed.

To attempt the imposition of taxes, without first agreeing to the reformation required, may drive the people to resistance. To yield entirely to the requisitions of the people, may be considered by them as a proof of weakness in the government, and encourage them to rise and go beyond reasonable bounds in their demands.

If it is attempted to make reformation and taxation go

hand in hand, by committing both to the consideration of a general assembly of the states, it may be difficult afterwards to take the management of the public affairs out of the hands of such an assembly, delegated by the nation at large; because a number of men convened for such a purpose naturally create courage, and communicate a spirit of enterprise to each other: and, in a country where many oppressive privileges and invidious distinctions, or, in other words, abuses, exist, the intended reformation may very possibly turn out a revolution.

M. de Calonne seems to have been aware of this; and therefore, however solicitous he might be to avoid the odium of new and heavy impositions, he also wished to elude the calling the states-general, by adopting a less formidable expedient.

It was an established practice in France, for every municipality to elect a number of its most respectable citizens, who, on extraordinary and important occasions, being joined to the common and usual council, became the *general* assembly of the municipality. This last additional body was called the body of *notables*. It has likewise been customary for the kings of France, on certain emergencies, to summon those of their subjects of whose judgment they had a good opinion, and consult with them. These men, while their function continued, were also called notables. The most essential difference between such an assembly and the assembly of the states-general seems to be, that the latter is entirely chosen by the king; whereas the former is appointed, under particular regulations, by the people.

M. de Calonne determined to summon an assembly of notables, in the expectation that a council summoned in the king's name, and elected by himself, would readily approve of the plans which he intended to lay before them; and as part of these plans were of a popular nature, he imagined they would render him popular also. The effect was the reverse; for people who are prejudiced against any person are more apt to conceive an ill opinion

of a good proposal, on account of the proposer, than a good opinion of the proposer on account of the proposition.

The principal tax proposed by him was the timbre or stamp tax, which it was thought would have produced about thirty millions of livres annually.

Many of his other operations would have been chiefly at the expense of the clergy—which drew upon him the hatred of that body, without procuring him the love of the rest of the nation. His proposed regulations were mostly directed against the ecclesiastical droits seigneuriaux honorifiques; as their right of appointing judges, the rights respecting fishing and hunting, and some others equally unconnected with the functions of clergymen. Although these produced but a small revenue, while in the hands of ecclesiastics, who, on account of their not residing on their benefices, could not reap the full advantage of them, yet the droit honorifiques were purchased at a great price by the gentlemen of the country, who were all ambitious of becoming seigneurs. Many people saw no injustice, but great propriety, in divesting the clergy of rights so foreign from their profession. The indifference with which men see the rights of others invaded, often forms a strong contrast with their sensibility when the least attack is made on their own. Many of the laity on this occasion insisted on the impropriety and injustice of the original grant, but laid no stress on the hardship of taking from men what they had possessed for ages. The clergy, on the other hand, exclaimed against the impiety of robbing the church, and the iniquity of stripping men of rights which they have long enjoyed, but left entirely out of the argument the absurdity of ever granting them such rights. Had the men's situations been reversed, their reasoning would have undergone the same change.

By the alienation of those privileges so useless to the clergy, the government would, as I am assured, have gained an yearly revenue of four or five hundred thou-

sand pounds sterling. The number of clergy at that time in France was prodigious, as the following calculation will show.—Forty-five thousand curés: the same number of vicars; cathedral and collegiate canons, comprehending the grand vicars, fifteen thousand; postulants and expectants, ten thousand; old men retired from the duties of their profession, three thousand; making in all one hundred and eighteen thousand men; to which number may be added, forty thousand monks, and about twenty-five thousand nuns: in all one hundred and eighty-three thousand persons employed exclusively in the duties of religion, and supported by donations of various kinds at the public expense.

It is curious to observe how effects sometimes change into causes, which produce other effects of a nature diametrically opposite to what first produced themselves.

A fervent zeal for religion, no doubt, was the cause of the vast accumulation of wealth belonging to the church in France; and the ample provision made for ecclesiastics of all denominations, was the cause of the vast number that were of that profession: and there can be as little doubt that the great numbers of ecclesiastics, with that profusion of revenue for their use, contributed greatly to the prejudice which took place against the clergy, and which has ended in a coolness and neglect, not only of them but of the religion they teach.

Every possible effort was made by the clergy to turn M. de Calonne from his plan of attack upon them; but as he persevered, the animosity of that body against him augmented every hour, and at length came to that degree, that none of them went to his house. Among the other extraordinary things, therefore, to be seen in France at this period, one was, the levee of a minister without a single ecclesiastic attending it.

The archbishop of Toulouse had long indulged the desire of being minister. His hopes of success were chiefly founded on the protection shewn to him by the queen. He

had hitherto been disappointed, however, by the small estimation in which the king held his talents and character.

The abbé de Vermon was a creature of the archbishop of Toulouse. He had formerly been at Vienna, and, at the recommendation of the archbishop of Toulouse, had been one of the queen's instructors before she left that court, and had retained a considerable share of her confidence. It was through the abbé Vermon that the archbishop had acquired the queen's favour. The same abbé had always kept the archbishop in hopes of succeeding in obtaining the situation of minister, and now assured him that nothing could so much favour his ambition as the disgrace of M. de Calonne. He represented this as a fortunate moment for the accomplishment of his wishes; for the king, who was known to have a strong desire to appease the irritated minds of the clergy, could find no more conspicuous opportunity than by choosing a distinguished member of that order as successor to their enemy. To this he added, that the great reputation of the archbishop as a man of talents and a statesman, his weight in the assembly of the notables, with the protection of the queen, would secure to him the situation he wished for in the administration, as soon as M. de Calonne should be dismissed; and therefore all means should be taken to incline the king to that measure, whenever any pretext should offer.

M. de Calonne imprudently furnished one himself soon after; for having perceived that the debates of the assembly made a great impression on the public mind, and hurt the public credit, he caused a memorial to be published in the king's name, and circulated with much profusion, asserting that it was not true that the majority of the committees of the assembly of notables refused the demands of the king; that the necessary previous discussions on those demands, which had taken place and still continued, ought not to be considered as a refusal; and

that it was evident, that the assembly intended almost unanimously to adopt the principal demands of his majesty.

This assertion, which was not literally exact, and which it was improper to publish, if it had been ever so much to be expected, offended the majority of the assembly, and produced a violent clamour against M. de Calonne, which being assisted by the queen, and by the king's aunts, whose piety made them take part against him as the enemy of the clergy, at last the king determined to dismiss him.

The archbishop of Toulouse was named minister; but, to save the odium which would accompany his taking the identical place of the person he had undermined, he had another appointed to the office of controller of the finance, who performed the duty under his direction, as all the other ministers did; the king, for that purpose, having conferred on the archbishop the title of principal minister.

M. de Calonne thus disgraced at court, abandoned by the assembly of the notables, and unpopular in the nation, quitted France full of rage and indignation.

The assembly itself was soon after dissolved; but the effects which the meeting of this assembly had produced were not so easily effaced. During their continuance, the general topics of conversation all over France were very different from what they used to be. The immensity of the deficit, the prodigality of the court, the distressed state of the kingdom, were the prevailing subjects of discussion in all companies, and were treated with equal warmth and nearly equal volubility by both sexes.

The abbé de Vermon and others had lamented these increasing evils, and had indicated the administration of the archbishop as the remedy. The remedy did not prove equal to the disease. The new minister condemned some of the measures of his predecessor, and so far the public went with him; he proposed others to supply their place, but they proved as unpalatable as the former. Instead of registering the decrees for his taxes, the parliament of

Paris remonstrated against them. The cry for the assembling of the states-general became louder and more general; and people talked with more boldness than ever. If the government, said they, cannot dispense with fresh succours from the people, neither ought it to dispense with asking them from those who, being delegated by the nation, have the sole right to grant them.

The notables, previous to their dissolution, had recommended a land and a stamp tax, the edicts for which were sent to the parliament to be enregistered. As it was foreseen that the parliament would be averse to the first, which was to be an equal impost affecting those of its own members, who had been hitherto exempted as part of the noblesse, extraordinary measures were thought expedient.

With a view of striking awe and producing submission, by a display of pageantry intermingled with military parade, the minister prevailed on the king to summon a bed of justice.

This measure would have had a better chance of being successful before the sitting of the notables. The discussions that had taken place during those sittings, had heated the public mind and rendered the people more daring. The Parisians shewed more indignation than terror at the military force which attended the king to the parliament. Monsieur, the king's elder brother, though of that serious and reserved character which is generally so much disliked in France, was received with applause by the people, because he had declared himself against M. de Calonne. The count d'Artois, whose disposition and manners had more affinity with the national character, was insulted by them, because he had been considered as his protector.

It was expected that the parliament would not have the boldness to disobey the king's orders pronounced by his own lips. To advise his majesty to risk the experiment, however, was no proof of the minister's prudence.

The parliament, driven to the alternative of disobeying the king, or provoking the people, chose the former. This circumstance alone proves, that the revolution already was

wonderfully advanced. After having for ages exercised the right of sanctioning taxes, and having maintained the doctrine that this right belonged to them exclusively, the parliament now declared, that they had not the power of registering taxes which were not consented to by the nation; and humbly demanded the speedy assembling of the states-general.

This unexpected declaration disconcerted the court, and threw the Parisians into transports of joy.

It was imagined that nothing could have rendered the parliament more popular than this declaration. The minister proved that this was a mistake; for he at once brought a great degree of odium on the court, and raised the popularity of the parliament still higher than it was before, by prevailing on the king to banish them to Troyes.

Popularity in France is more fluctuating and of shorter duration than in any other country. That of the parliament of Paris was very short-lived; it was extinguished by their doing in exile what they had refused in the capital. They were prevailed on to register a tax, and soon after returned to Paris.

A loan was proposed by the minister, and approved of by several members of the parliament. This measure was to be decreed in the king's presence. The duke of Orleans protested against some proceedings on this occasion.

It was a new thing in France for a prince of the blood, not in actual rebellion nor at the head of an army, to oppose the will of the sovereign. By some this conduct was imputed to conscientious motives, and by others to criminal ambition. Most probably it proceeded from neither. The duke had been in England, where he acquired a violent taste for the dress and some of the amusements of that country, particularly that of horse-racing, in which he obtained some knowledge, and was thought to have converted it to his advantage at his return to France. He had also been delighted with the opposition occasion-

ally exhibited in the British parliament to the measures of government; and his vanity was flattered with the idea of transmitting this practice, with other novelties, to France; thinking that, during the present tide of popular opinion, he might with personal safety lead that fashion.

The duke of Orleans, however, was banished to one of his estates near Paris; and two counsellors of the parliament, who had spoken in support of his protest, were seized, and sent to separate prisons.

After the declaration which the parliament of Paris had made, there was very small probability that the public would be satisfied without the assembling of the states. The court, however, was exceedingly averse to this measure, and used every device to evade it; but it was not likely that what had been attempted in vain under the direction of M. de Calonne, in times of less turbulency, would be accomplished at the present moment by a minister of less shrewdness and capacity. It was not in the power of the court to sharpen his wit, or enlarge his capacity; but what was possible to do was done for him. The archbishop of Toulouse was declared principal minister; and encouraged by this new dignity, he formed a scheme which he hoped would enable the government to dispense with the parliament as well as the states-general.

This scheme was to establish a number of courts of justice in France, and at the same time to create a grand court under the title of *Cour pleniere*, all the members of which were to be named by the crown; and the express purpose of this last court was to enregister the king's edicts.

The edict ordaining this important innovation, with some others, was printed at Versailles; the whole being intended to be kept secret, until it should be laid before the different parliaments at the same moment in the beginning of May.

There is no question that, if this scheme had been submitted to, it must have had the effect proposed. The credit of defeating it has been generally attributed to M.

d'Espremenil, a member of the parliament of Paris, who had the address to procure a copy of the intended edicts, which he immediately communicated to that body, among whom they excited great indignation and the spirit of resistance. It seems exceedingly probable, however, that they would have excited the same indignation and as effectual a resistance as soon as they appeared, although the publication had not taken place until the time fixed on by the minister. I cannot give the same importance, therefore, that some have done, to M. d'Espremenil's discovery; nor do I think the policy of keeping the project secret wonderfully profound: for before the copy of the edicts was obtained, it was known that a paper was printing by orders of the administration at Versailles, instead of being printed at the usual press at Paris; that sentries were placed in the printing-house, to prevent those employed from conversing with any other persons. Those circumstances, with the mysterious conduct of ministers, could not fail to create a prejudice against the edicts, before the nature of them could be known. Men are usually more afraid of objects in the dark than in the light. Ordonnances, concealed with so much care, created, it is probable, more terror than if they had been published in the usual way without any air of mystery or concealment. Violent harangues were pronounced in the parliament against those edicts, and stronger insinuations were risked against the conduct of the minister, than had been heard in that assembly since the days of the Fronde.

M. d'Espremenil became the peculiar object of ministerial resentment, for having brought the project to light a little sooner than was intended. A lettre de cachet was issued against him; he escaped from the exempt, and took refuge in the parliament, which immediately decreed that he was under the safeguard of the king and of the law; and at the same time sent a deputation of their members to Versailles, with a petition to the king in favour of D'Espremenil, and another member of their body against whom an order of arrest had been also issued. It was decreed

at the same time, that the court should continue their sitting until the deputation, which consisted of the first president and four counsellors, should return.

They arrived at Versailles at seven in the evening; at midnight they were given to understand, that they could not be received by his majesty. And the next day a body of troops surrounded the hall of parliament, and no person was allowed to enter or go out. At eleven in the morning, an officer who commanded the troops entered, and required that M. d'Espremenil should be delivered up to him. The whole court, answered one of the members, is composed of Espremenils.

The officer not knowing how to proceed in circumstances so new and so delicate, retired, and sent a message for fresh orders. In this state things remained for the space of twelve hours, the parliament surrounded with troops, while a vast concourse of the inhabitants of Paris viewed the scene with indignation, and might, by the slightest incident, have been provoked to attack the troops, and begun a scene of mutual bloodshed and slaughter.

This was prevented by the prudence of M. d'Espremenil and his friend; who seeing there was a determination in the minister to seize them, delivered themselves into the hands of the officer; and one was carried to the state prison in the isle of St. Marguerite; the other, M. Monsabert, to that of Pierre Encise.

This open rupture between the court and the parliament, while it tended to weaken the influence of each, fostered a third power which had not hitherto been properly attended to by either, and has finally proved the destruction of both.

CHAPTER IV.

Discontents—Parliament remonstrates—Cour Pleniere—Bed of Justice at Versailles—Members of the Parliament of Paris protest—Certain Peers address the King—Mild Answer of the King—Other Courts imitate the Example of the Parliament of Paris—The Minister resigns—Instances of Bigotry and Persecution—Reflections.

In the present disposition of the public, nothing could be more imprudent than giving a spectacle so likely to rouse indignation, as the sight of two magistrates in their robes carried through the streets by a military force; and that it passed without bloodshed before the eyes of a multitude of exasperated Frenchmen is not the least extraordinary circumstance.

But what seemed to have been prevented, as if by miracle, on this remarkable occasion, was threatened on many trifling occurrences afterwards. The hatred against the archbishop was so great, that his name could not be mentioned, nor any thing that could be constrained into an allusion to him uttered, without exciting symptoms of fury against him.

The tragedy of Athalie was advertised at the Comedie Françoise. It is a religious piece; and many were surprised to find the house crowded: but they understood the reason, when they recollected, that there is a wicked priest, who is also a favourite at court, among the dramatis personæ, and when they observed in what manner the following verses which he pronounces were applied by the audience.—

> Qu'importe qu'au hazard un sang vil soit versé?
> Est-ce aux Rois à garder cette lente justice?
> Leur sureté souvent depend d'un prompt supplice,
> N'allons point les géner d'un soin embarrassant,
> Dès qu'on leur est suspect, on n'est plus innocent.

To this it is answered,

> Hé quoi, Mathan? D'un prêtre est-cela le langage?

And the whole house resounded with applause, which was

followed by many curses directed against Mathan: and nobody mistook who was meant by Mathan.

The parliament, encouraged by the spirit which the people displayed not only at Paris, but all over the kingdom, so far from being intimidated by the violent steps taken against them by the court, manifested more courage than ever. They prepared a remonstrance to the king, on the violence of invading the seat of justice with armed men, the tyranny exercised in the seizure of two of their members, and the refusal of receiving their deputation. They proceed to state their apprehensions of a design of overthrowing the *established constitution*, in such terms as convey an idea, that France was possessed of a very free and excellent form of government; for they insinuate that there has existed, ever since the year 1771, a plan to overturn it, and introduce an arbitrary goverment in its stead; but that the king's authority would be respected only in proportion to its being regulated by law and equity.

The parliament were much to be praised for doing all they could to obtain freedom to their country; but if they required no more than she possessed in the year 1771, their demand was certainly too moderate. If the parliament imagined, that stoutly asserting that the government had been formerly free would contribute to its being in future what they declared it to have formerly been, the assertion was one of the most excusable, not to say laudable, deviations from truth, that ever was made by a body of men.

The minister, in the meantime, proceeded in his favourite scheme of established the cour pleniere, which was to be composed not of lawyers only, but also of persons of higher rank and other professions, and intended in many respects as a substitute for the parliament, particularly in the office of registering the king's edicts. For the formation of this court, a bed justice was held at Versailles on the 8th of May, to which the parliament of Paris was summoned, and attended accordingly.

It seemed peculiarly severe to the members, not only to be condemned to ruin, but also to be summoned to lend a helping hand to their own destruction.

This bed of justice was opened by a long speech from the king, in which he accused the parliament of having deviated from their duty, and interrupted the useful operations of government in many instances, for a year past, and of having encouraged the provincial parliaments to follow their example. His majesty added, that although he had been obliged to use some acts of rigour to some of their body, he did not intend to destroy his parliament, but to bring them within the limits of their original institution, which they had greatly overleaped. He finished by giving a general idea of the new court, the nature of which was more particularly explained by M. de Lamoignon, the keeper of the seals; after which the various ordinances were registered, and the king concluded by a second speech, in which he expressed a hope that those members of parliament whom he had nominated to form part of the cour pleniere would by their fidelity and obedience merit his favour, and induce him to call others of their body to that assembly; adding, that he was fully convinced that the new institution would, upon the whole, contribute to the good and prosperity of the nation at large.

If his majesty believed that this last observation would have made those to whom it was addressed satisfied with a measure which was evidently hurtful to their own particular interest and importance, he must also have thought them more disinterested and virtuous than mankind in general, or even than that class whose peculiar duty and profession it is to explain law and administer justice, are supposed to be.

The king's speech was heard in silence. That this silence implied disapprobation appeared early the following morning, when all the members of the parliament, who were to compose the cour pleniere, drew up a protest against the proceedings of the former day, in which

they disclaimed having given any sanction to them; and declared that they all declined any seat in the cour pleniere.

Along with this protest, a letter from six peers was delivered to the king, in which they express their sorrow that an attempt should have been made to subvert the fundamental principles of the government; that they could take no part in the functions which the new court imposed on the peerage; and that they were prompted in this by zeal for the true interest of his majesty.

It was to be expected, that such a protest of the parliament, supported by such a letter from six peers, would have made the court either renounce the whole scheme of the cour pleniere, or else immediately bring forth those means, which hitherto had been concealed from the public, on which they relied for making it effectual; the king's advisers must have thought the means they were to use very powerful, since they had to overcome the resistance of the whole parliament and part of the peerage, the disapprobation of the majority of the clergy, and that marked aversion which had been shewn to the measure from the beginning by the public at large.

A few hours after the parliament's protest and the peers letter had been presented to the king, that part of the parliament which was to be of the cour pleniere was unexpectedly summoned by his majesty to re-assemble in the hall from which they had just withdrawn. And when the king appeared in person, all were persuaded that they were about to hear that the obnoxious measure was to be abandoned; or, if they should be disappointed in that expectation, they thought they would be so far gratified at least, as to learn what they had tortured their ingenuity in vain to divine—namely, what the resources were on which the minister depended for making it good.

But after so much expectation and curiosity had been excited, every body was surprised to hear his majesty repeat, with little alteration or addition, what he had said

the day before, respecting his determination to carry the new ordinances into execution; immediately after which he dismissed the assembly.

The most probable conjecture that was made to account for a scene which seemed so devoid of meaning was, that on receiving the protest and letter, something had been resolved on by the court, which required to be directly announced to the parliament; and that after the members were summoned, the measure so suddenly adopted had been as suddenly renounced, and the king obliged to meet them before a plausible pretext had been thought of for calling them together.

Whatever may be in this, those magistrates met again the same evening, and in a new address to the king confirmed their former resolutions, and ordered the same to be printed and dispersed all over the kingdom. The following paragraph will give an idea of this second declaration.—

'Nous declarons que nous persisterons jusqu'à notre dernier soupir dans les arrêtés précédement pris par ladite cour, et dans les principes y contenus.' *

The king sent back to each of the six peers his letter with the following answer.—

'Mon Cousin, pour ne pas vous marquer trop de déplaisir de la lettre que vous m'avez écrite, je vous la renvoie. Je veux bien ne l'attribuer qu'à un premier mouvement, et je vous prie d'y reflechir sérieusement.'†

Whether it was the extreme moderation of this letter, or some other consideration, that produced the effect, is not known; but three of the peers withdrew their support of the parliament's protest immediately after they had received the king's answer.

* We declare that we will persist to our last breath in the protests already taken by the parliament, and in the principles they contain.

† My Cousin,—That I may not shew too much displeasure at the letter you have written to me, I send it back to you. I am willing to impute it to a hasty impulse, and I desire you will reconsider it with attention.

In the meantime orders had been sent to Paris, for clapping the king's seal upon the bureaus containing the papers and archives belonging to the parliament, and for locking them and carrying away the keys. The other parliaments in the kingdom were also suspended from their functions, from holding any meetings, and from issuing any memorials or resolutions on public affairs.

The court of Chatelet, so far from being intimidated by, or showing obedience to these measures and orders, after a long sitting, published a declaration containing a protest in the strongest terms against them. This example was followed by other courts in the provinces. Strong symptoms of discontent were manifested all over the kingdom, which ended in insurrections in Brittany, Dauphiny, Languedoc, and other parts.

An hurricane of unexampled violence, which happened on the 13th of July 1788, by its extensive devastation in various parts of France, occasioned much private misery, in addition to the public discontent which before existed.

The minister, now archbishop of Sens, being terrified from holding any longer a place which had produced to him so much inward anguish and outward odium, or remaining any longer in a country where the elements as well as the people seemed to declare against him, suddenly resigned, and set out with all possible expedition for Italy.

It is said that he earnestly advised the king to replace M. Necker in his former situation as minister of the finance. Whether this was true or not, it is certain that the archbishop's friends took great pains to spread the report, with a view to render him less obnoxious to the people; and it has even been asserted, that to this report the minister was indebted for effecting a safe retreat out of France; as the people were often disposed to stop and insult him—but desisted, upon being assured that it was by his advice that M. Necker was reappointed.

This fact will appear the more curious when it is re-

collected, that in the year 1572 a king of France issued an order to massacre all the Protestants in his dominions, and the order was obeyed with alacrity by his Catholic subjects in the capital and in some of the provinces.

In 1593, the most accomplished of all their princes was obliged to abjure the Protestant religion, to render himself acceptable to the French people.

In 1685, the edict of Nantes in favour of the Protestants of France was revoked, and prodigious numbers of the most industrious inhabitants were driven out of the kingdom by the despicable bigotry of their grand monarch and the furious zeal of the people.

Even so lately as the year 1762, the Protestant clergy were executed legally for the exercise of their profession. One of the name of Rochette was taken up for that crime at Montauban, and carried to Toulouse, where he was condemned and executed. Three brothers of the name of Grenier, Protestants, of a noble family in Languedoc, having made some endeavours for the release of the minister Rochette, when he was first taken up, were apprehended, conveyed to Toulouse with him, and condemned to lose their heads; which sentence was put in execution.

But the spirit of bigotry and persecution which prevailed in the south of France, particularly at Toulouse, appeared in a still more shocking shape, in the cruelties exercised on the unfortunate Calas family, as they are particularized in the writings of Voltaire, and were proved before the parliament of Paris.

One example, among many, of the great and rapid alterations that have taken place in the public opinion within these few last years, is, that notwithstanding some of the instances above mentioned occurred in the year 1762, yet in the year 1788 a prime minister of France, the archbishop of that very Toulouse, found protection in travelling through France, and was skreened from the indignation of the people, through the influence and po-

pularity of a man who was at once a stranger, a republican, and a heretic.

Any material alteration in the opinions and prejudices of a whole nation took much longer time in former ages to be brought about. Since material alterations in the public opinions may, for reasons which are so obvious that they need not be pointed out, be effected with infinitely more rapidity than heretofore, it is of more importance now than ever for all governments, particularly those of free countries, to be alert in attending to these alterations as they occur, that they may be able in time to preclude the mischiefs which arise from the current of public opinion bearing one way, and the measures of government another; for, to maintain tranquillity, one of two things must be done: a minister must either adapt his measures to the public opinion; or, which is a much more difficult task, and requires very uncommon talents to accomplish, he must turn round the public opinion in favour of his measures—which task, difficult as it is, has sometimes been performed with infinite ability and address.

No minister of this stamp had appeared for a long time in France. The general sentiments of the nation had been flowing for several years in opposition to the nature of the existing government. Many ancient institutions, established by power, cemented by craft, and venerated by superstition, were now looked on as ridiculous, and complained of as oppressive. A few well-judged concessions and alterations, had they been made in time, might have proved satisfactory, and restored tranquillity. But old grievances remained unredressed, new sources of complaint were daily springing up, and such an accumulation of discontent had been formed as obscured the political hemisphere, and threatened an approaching storm.

The vessel of the state never was in a more shattered condition, never was assailed by more violent storms, and never had been intrusted to a pilot less qualified for steering her through the sand-banks and rocks among which she was involved.

The archbishop of Toulouse, although he might have foreseen all the dangers he had to encounter, before he took such pains to supersede M. de Calonne, seemed not to have dicovered them till after he was minister, and to have been deprived of all presence of mind as soon as they opened to his view. He adopted measures equally weak and inconsistent. First he assumes an air of courage, and tries to strike terror by the parade of a bed of justice, and by banishing the parliament. He then recalls the parliament, and seems disposed to court and conciliate the members; and immediately afterwards he quarrels with them again, seizes two of their number, and sends them to distant prisons. But on finding that those rigorous measures no way intimidated the people, who still continued to resist, he himself became intimidated, and suddenly quitted the helm. The archbishop seems in point of courage to have been such a minister as Ancient Pistol was a soldier —fierce and swaggering to a yielding foe, but ready to fly from a *Barbary hen, if her feathers turn back in any shew of resistance.*

CHAPTER V.

Exhibition in the Street—M. Necker—Political Pamphlets—Opinions respecting the Number of Deputies of the Tiers-Etat—Search for Precedents—Second Assembly of the Notables—French Parliaments—The Notables give their Opinion—The States-General are constituted on a different Plan—The Minister's Motives for this.

The hatred of the Parisians to their late minister, and their joy at his disgrace, appeared by certain exhibitions in the streets of Paris, which are characteristic of a French mob. Some of these scenes were of a ludicrous nature, and some faintly typify the wanton and atrocious transactions on the same theatre at subsequent periods.

A number of idle people, having dressed the stuffed figure of a man in the robes of an archbishop, carried it

through the streets in procession to the place of execution, where it was to be publicly burnt; and some of the mob perceiving an ecclesiastic among the spectators, laid hold of him, called him Abbé Vermon and father confessor to the archbishop, and having obliged him to mimic the ceremony of confessing a condemned criminal, they threw the effigy of the minister into the flames. When the populace were preparing to repeat this piece of mummery the next day, the military were ordered to interfere: the consequence was, that several people were killed and more wounded.

Every incident that tended to irritate the minds of the people against the executive power was particularly unfortunate at this time, when the states-general were about to be assembled.

A considerable number of men convened together, with powers delegated by the nation at large, for the express purpose of reforming abuses, naturally communicate courage and a spirit of enterprise to each other; and where many grievances are to be redressed, what was intended merely for the purpose of reformation is exceedingly likely to be the cause of a revolution.

The former minsters had foreseen this, and therefore used every art to preclude, and afterwards to postpone, the convention of the states. The most effectual means would have been a timely reformation of the most oppressive abuses; but this had been neglected. No measure was adopted for reforming any, until they were forced into this scheme for reforming all.

The scene which had been acted in the streets of Paris, at the execution in effigy of the archbishop, was imitated in the provinces, where various tumults occurred. Some blood was shed, and a general insurrection was dreaded: but the replacing M. Necker in the office he had formerly held, put an end to those apprehensions, and gave an almost general satisfaction all over the nation.

M. Necker was a citizen of Geneva, bred a banker; and in that business at Paris he accumulated a very large

fortune, sustaining the character of a man of integrity. His fortune enabled him, and his inclination prompted him, to live in a style at once splendid and hospitable; his house was frequented by men of rank and by men of letters. His education, according to the custom of his country, had been more of a literary nature than it is usual in other countries to give to those who are bred to what is called business; he cultivated his taste for letters in the intervals of business ever after; he was thought to have just, extensive, and philosophical ideas on the subjects of commerce and finance; to be an able calculator, and indefatigable in business; his greatest enemies have not been able to injure his reputation for probity.

At a time when the finances of France were in great disorder, it is not surprising that a man of such a character, and so connected, should be thought of as a proper person to regulate them: yet it has been asserted, that he owed his appointment to the office of director of the finance to the recommendation of M. de Pezay, who had great influence with M. de Maurepas the prime minister, and whose recommendations are said to have been sometimes very expensive to obtain.

This took place several years previous to the revolution. The public had the highest expectation from the measure; for M. Necker's talents had been praised with an exaggeration which the enthusiasm of the moment alone could have rendered credible.

If any attempted to insinuate that the office was too high and confidential for a foreigner, a banker, and a heretic, those very circumstances were retorted as proofs of the wisdom of placing him in it; for what else, it was said, but the most superlative abilities could have made a foreigner, a banker, and a heretic, be thought of as minister of France?

Notwithstanding his situation, however, M. Necker had no immediate communication with the king in the way of his office, it being part of the duty of M. Ta-

boureau, the controller-general of finance, to communicate on that business with his majesty: but the superior knowledge of M. Necker, or perhaps the prevailing opinion that he possessed a superior knowledge, was so mortifying to M. Taboureau, that he resigned his office; which placed M. Necker in the situation he earnestly desired.

Soon after he had been appointed director-general, he suppressed the offices of intendants des finances, which were occupied by members of the king's council. The enemies of M. Necker have asserted, that his only reason for this reform was, that he did not find those gentlemen sufficiently convinced of his superior talents; for there was nothing saved to the public by this reform, because the value of the places was paid to each of those gentlemen, and the interest of the money was nearly equal to the emoluments of the office.

M. Necker, thus gratified in the desire of communicating directly with the king on the business of his office, still found himself excluded from the council of state. His religion prevented his taking the oath exacted of all before they could be admitted into that council. He did not relish this exclusion, and imagined that his credit with the public, and the need which he conceived the council had for the lights which he could throw on their deliberations, would prevail on his majesty to dispense with the oath in his particular case. He therefore thought proper to address the king by letter, representing the inconveniences which arose from his not being personally at the council, and requesting that he might be admitted in future.

M. Maurepas had been for some time displeased with M. Necker. He represented the request as arrogant; and to M. Necker's astonishment and mortification, instead of being admitted into the cabinet-council, he was dismissed from the administration.

However surprised he and his friends were at a disgrace so unexpected, he did not lose the hope of being

soon reinstated in his office; and his friends and admirers, of which he had a great number, never ceased asserting that there was only one man in France capable of re-establishing the finances and tranquillity of that country, and M. Necker was that man.

The conduct of M. Necker's successors did not prove that the first clause of this assertion was false; nor did his own conduct after he was reinstated in his office, prove that the last clause was true. If the man in question really exists, unfortunately for France he has not as yet been discovered.

A laboured work on the subject of French finance was the fruit of M. Necker's retreat, and the means which he thought most likely to bring about his recal; which, however, although this work threw new light on the state of the revenue, developed his own plan of economy, and was greatly relished by the public, did not take place until the retreat of the archbishop of Sens, as mentioned above, which was three years after the publication of M. Necker's work.

One of the first acts of M. Necker's administration was, recalling the exiled magistrates, and re-establishing the parliaments in the exercise of their functions. He was also determined upon the popular measure of assembling the states-general; but whether he was decided in his mind as to the mode of their being constituted or not, he seemed at least to have the appearance of deliberating on that point.

The public mind had been for some time kept in continual agitation with political discussions in general, and on this in particular. The presses all over France poured forth political pamphlets without number, in the greater part of which the abuses of government and the faults of administration were enumerated with exaggeration. These writings, like most political pamphlets, were highly praised, and represented as irresistibly convincing, by all who were of the writer's opinion, before they read them. The praises were so loud, and so often repeated,

that many who never before thought on political subjects, and some who had long renounced the practice of reading on any subject, were induced to peruse them with avidity. Politics became the universal topic of conversation, and political pamphlets the fashionable study; it extended to both sexes and to every condition. Novels lay neglected, like sermons, on the shelves of the booksellers; and the manufacturer suspended that labour which was to procure his dinner, that he might finish the essai sur les privileges, and be able to answer this important question, qu'est-ce que le tiers-etat?

The effect of these lucubrations was, very often to make people complain of oppressions which they had never before felt, and view those with hatred whom they had before regarded with love and respect.

In some of the publications it was proposed, that the representatives of the tiers-etat, at the assembly of the states, should consist of a number equal to the noblesse and the clergy.

Some people thought this of little importance; because they believed that the assembly would vote by orders, and not by individual voices; in which case the tiers, whatever their number was, would have but one vote.

Others on the contrary thought it of considerable importance, even although it should be decided that the three classes, of which the states-general were to consist, should vote by orders; because, in a variety of cases which might occur independent of voting, the influence of six hundred deputies might carry points in the assembly, when that of three hundred would have failed.

But it was not very difficult to foresee, that, if it were once determined that the tiers-etat should consist of twice as many deputies as either of the other two orders, that determination would in all probability prove also decisive of the other question, of the manner in which the states should vote: for, on the supposition that all the three orders consisted of the same number of deputies, the noblesse and the clergy joining, which it was natural to

think they would do, would be able to carry every question against the tiers; whereas, if the latter consisted of double the number, they, with a small addition from the other two orders, which they were certain of having, would carry every question against them: and it could not be doubted, that they would begin by securing the great and important point, that the assembly should *not* vote by orders, but by individual votes. It was a matter, therefore, of the utmost importance, what number of deputies the third order should be directed to send to the assembly of the states.

M. Necker, finding the public impatience for the assembling the states-general to increase every day, appointed certain persons to search historical registers, and make a report respecting the plans and forms that had been observed in constituting the assembly of the states on former occasions.

A report was made accordingly; but it was not deemed of sufficient authority by M. Necker for any measure to be founded on it. Some have asserted, that the true reason of this report not being published or acted on was, that no instance was discovered of the tiers having deputed a double number to the assembly of the states-general. M. Necker, therefore, prevailed on the king to convene the notables, and take their opinion on this very delicate subject. They were summoned, and they assembled accordingly; but before the notables had given any formal opinion on the subject, the parliament of Paris, which had been so lately restored to the exercise of its functions, took a step which surprised many, was directly in opposition to the conduct which had occasioned the banishment of the members, and which ruined them for ever with the popular party. They passed a decree, ordaining that the states should be constituted in the same manner they had been in the year 1614, when the tiers-etat had about the same number of representatives with each of the other two orders.

The various parliaments of France, particularly that of

Paris, had on certain occasions, when government was weak, refused to enregister the king's edicts, and thereby conveyed an idea that their sanction was necessary to give them force. This was usurping a share in the legislation which it was never intended they should possess; but in which they had been supported by the people, because the remonstrances of the parliaments against oppressive taxes and other oppressions had occasionally proved a check on the arbitrary power of government.

These lawyers, therefore, who bought their offices in the parliament, had wrought themselves into an importance which it was not originally intended they should have; and although they formed a peculiar species of aristocracy between the commons and the noblesse, they were all that the people of France had for their representatives, and their only defence against the injustice and rapacity of ministers.

The parliament of Paris, on the present occasion, may have been afraid of the consequence of the tiers having a double number of representatives, as a measure which might diminish their own power; but it is probable that they were prompted to this measure by the influence of the notables, with a view of rendering their own decision more palatable to the public. Without this supposition, it seems highly improbable that the parliament would have ventured to decide a point of this nature, while it was actually under reference to the notables. If, however, their decision had been in favour of the double number claimed by the tiers, there is no question but that their conduct would have been praised by the public as highly becoming, instead of being decried as impertinent and officious.

In the meantime the notables continued their deliberations. They were divided into different bureaus or committees, as on the former occasion. The committee of which *monsieur* was president decided, by the majority of a single vote, that the third order should delegate double the number of members. All the other committees, and

there were ten or a dozen, decided that the third order should only have an equal number.*

After the notables had pronounced their opinions in so decisive a manner in favour of the noblesse and clergy, it was to be expected that the minister would direct the states to be constituted and to assemble according to the rule which the court, to which he himself had referred the matter, had recommended; for nobody could have imagined that the principal persons of the nation would have been formally assembled, and their advice asked on purpose to reject it.

Their advice *was* rejected however: the king's proclamation, by which the states-general were ordered to be constituted and assembled, appointed that the number of the deputies from the tiers-etat should be *equal to that of the two others united.*

People were much at a loss to account for M. Necker's motive for a conduct apparently so inconsistent.

Some assert that, when M. Necker summoned the notables, he really wished the business arranged in the manner he was convinced *they* would determine, by recommending only an equal number of deputies to the tiers; but that after they had given their opinion, he was assured that, if that method was adopted, it would ruin his popularity for ever. On this he made his famous report to the council, on which the proclamation above mentioned was founded.

Others have suspected, that his referring the question to the notables, publishing their opinion, and then deciding in opposition to it according to the wishes of the people, was a contrivance to raise his popularity to the greatest possible height, by demonstrating that the opinion of the greatest men in the country was of little weight with him in comparison with the desire of the people.

But this is assigning a degree of dissimulation and du-

* During this second assembly of notables, the duke of Orleans seldom appeared at Versailles, and never presided at the committee of which he was president.

plicity to M. Necker, which at no time belonged to his character. It must have occurred to him, however, that he had little chance of ever acquiring great influence with the noblesse, the majority of whom despised him on account of his birth, more than they admired him for his talents or integrity. He had as little chance of becoming a favourite with the clergy, who hated him on account of his particular religion, more than they esteemed him for his general piety: but by augmenting the power of the tiers-etat, and thus attaching them to him, he might expect to insure his own, and be enabled to do all the good he intended, and acquire all the renown which his ambition desired.

The notables gave their decision in the month of December 1788. M. Necker towards the end of the same month laid his report before the council, concerning the same subject on which the notables had previously given their opinion. In this report three questions are stated for the consideration of the council: the first regards the manner in which the deputies were to be elected; the second, the number of which those of the third order should consist; and the third question was, whether each order should be obliged to choose the deputies from their own class, or might elect them from all the three. M. Necker's report was a laboured reasoning on these three questions, all of which he decided differently from the notables: the second question is by much the most important; and the chief object of M. Necker is to prove the expediency of the *tiers* having double the number of deputies.

This report, having been approved by the council, was published at the beginning of 1789. All Europe were certainly surprised, that a measure, which many foresaw would operate so powerfully against the crown, should have been recommended by the king's minister, and approved of by his council; yet M. Necker said, that in this he only followed what he called *le bruit sourd de l'Europe.*

He also declares, what nobody will think improbable, that it was the general desire of the tiers-etat themselves; and their desire, he adds, must be considered as the desire of the nation. This seems rather hard on the noblesse and clergy, who had been accustomed to consider themselves as a very considerable part of the nation. They were now informed that their importance was nearly gone, and that the best way of retaining a little would be to amalgamate themselves with the general mass of the people. Some of them took the hint very soon afterwards.

Another of M. Necker's reasons, as little flattering for the noblesse and clergy as the former, was, that by calling a great number of deputies from the tiers, a greater quantity and variety of knowledge useful to government would be concentered, than by the same number of deputies from either of the other two orders: but as if he had been afraid that it might be suspected that he meant to insinuate, that the third order of the state had the superiority in every kind of knowledge, that they even excelled the noblesse in polite accomplishments and the bishops in divinity, he qualifies the assertion by particularizing commerce, manufactures, agriculture, with the knowledge of finance, and of the properest measures for supporting public credit, as the branches in which the tiers excelled.

He next admonishes the third order to use the power which is to be devolved to them with prudence and moderation, and by no means ever to think of making use of it to force the assembly to decide questions by individual votes, but always by their different orders.

M. Necker must have ideas very different from what are generally received regarding the efficacy of advice, and the manner in which newly-acquired power is usually exercised, if he really expected that the third order would act with all the moderation he so wisely advised. What rendered this the less to be expected was, that this order considered themselves as having been for a long period

of time very scurvily used by the two others, and might therefore have been suspected of being disposed to indulge in retaliation; especially as the Christian religion, and the divine precept of doing good for evil, seemed to make less impression than ever on the minds of the French nation at this period.

M. Necker proceeds to assure the king, that he will on the whole be a gainer by the diminution of his own power and the augmentation of that of the people. In the language of philosophy he tells the monarch, 'La satisfaction attachée à un pouvoir sans limite est toute d'imagination.——Votre majesté, en s'entourant des députés de la nation, se délivre d'une suite cruelle d'incertitudes et de balancemens, de defiances et de regrets, qui doivent faire le malheur d'un prince, tant qu'il demeure sensible au bien de l'état et à l'amour de ses peuples.'*

This argument to persuade a king to abridge his power, because of the solicitudes which attend it, however ingenious and just it may be, is not more successful than the common one against riches. Men have been long told, that money is the root of all evil, and that heaping up riches is heaping up care. Nobody disputes the truth of the maxims; but nobody gives away money, on purpose to be relieved from care: on the contrary, we see men of immense wealth, whose only pangs and vexations in life arise from money; yet, like the man who put a serpent in his bosom, they hug it, although it stings them, and the more it stings them, they hug it the more.

The argument is seldom used, therefore, in the hope of prevailing on people to resign their riches voluntarily; it is only applied to those who by some accident have lost part of their fortune, to console them for what cannot be helped; and in this sense M. Necker's reasoning must be understood—not as intended to persuade the king to give

* The pleasure of unlimited power is imaginary. By surrounding your person with the national deputies, you will be freed from much anxiety and solicitude, and many of those sources of regret which create the unhappiness of every prince endowed with sensibility for the good of the state and the love of his subjects.

up power which he could keep, but to comfort him under the loss of what he could not retain.

M. Necker concludes with a supposition of the possibility that the tiers might not act with all the moderation that was to be wished; in which case he mentions, as his last advice, a measure from which it is difficult to imagine that any great comfort could flow. 'Cependant,' continues he, 'si une difference dans le nombre de députés du tiers-etat devenoit un sujet ou un pretexte de discorde; si, par des vues particulieres, on cherchoit à lasser l'honorable constance de V. M.; si votre volonté, sire, n'étoit pas suffisante pour lever ces obstacles; alors quel conseil pourrai-je donner à V. M.? Un seul, et ce seroit le dernier, celui de sacrifier le ministre qui auroit eu le plus de part à votre deliberation.' *

As this last measure could remedy none of the mischiefs supposed to be done by the advice which the minister had prevailed on the king to follow; and as it will appear of small importance in the eyes of most people, it is a little surprising that M. Necker mentions it with so much emphasis.

Sensible that his influence in the cabinet depended on his popularity, and believing that his popularity would be ruined, if the favourite point of a double representation of the tiers was not carried, he persuaded the king into that measure; yet it is not difficult to perceive his fears, lest a bad use should be made of it, breaking through his reasoning in its favour.

His ambition lulled his fears, and tempted him to risk all the evils which threatened, but which his vanity made him believe he had ability to overcome. Had he foreseen with certainty half the mischiefs that were the consequence of that measure, no consideration could have pre-

* Nevertheless, if a difference in the number of deputies of the tiers-etat becomes a subject or a pretence of discord; if, from private views, they tried to tire your majesty's constancy; if your will, sire, should not be sufficient to remove these obstacles; what advice can I then give to your majesty? Only one, and it shall be the last,—namely, to sacrifice the minister who has had the principal share in advising you to this measure.

vailed on M. Necker to advise it; for he unquestionably had the prosperity of the French nation sincerely at heart, as his greatest ambition was to be the instrument of it. Although born a republican, he was of opinion that a republican form of government neither suited the extent of the French empire, nor the character of the French people. He was the friend of liberty; but thought she could be sure of a permanent and happy residence in France under a limited monarchical form of government only; yet his conduct immediately before the assembling of the states-general, and for some time afterwards, has been thought to have greatly contributed to the destruction of monarchy in France, and to the establishment of a republic which hitherto seems of a more terrible nature than any government that ever was known, inasmuch as it seems to combine all the tyranny of which republicans accuse monarchy, with all the anarchy of which the friends of monarchy accuse republics.

CHAPTER VI.

The Nobility of Great Britain and Ireland—The Noblesse of France.

THE deputies to the states-general being elected were, in the terms of the king's proclamation, to assemble at Versailles, and the assembly was to be opened on the 5th of May 1789.

The public at large expected the redress of many grievances, and the reformation of many abuses, from this assembly; but as the noblesse and clergy enjoyed many privileges and immunities at the expense of the tiers-etat, it may easily be imagined that a number of those would appear abuses in the eyes of the latter, which were regarded as wise institutions by the former.

The privileges possessed, and the superiority assumed, by the noblesse of France over the inferior orders, were evils of greater magnitude than they may seem to those

Englishmen who judge by the impression which the privileges and conduct of the nobility of their own country make on the minds of their countrymen.

The precedency and distinctions which the nobility enjoy in common society in England are never refused, unless when arrogated; and therefore are seldom or never assumed, but always granted.

When the peerage is possessed by persons of truly great and amiable characters, which sometimes happens, all the world are pleased to see honours so well bestowed. When the reverse is the case, those who afford the example generally have the privileges and distinctions of the peerage so cruelly counterbalanced by other moral and physical circumstances, that on the whole they are far from being the objects of envy..

It has been asserted, that those British peers who form examples of the first alternative were not born to the peerage, but obtained it on account of their distinguished merit, and therefore form no exception to the pernicious effect of hereditary honours. But there is more satire than truth in this observation; for, after all that can be alleged of the torpor which the certainty of enjoying honourable distinction independent of personal merit may throw on the mind, there are instances of men born to the highest titles and greatest fortune, who nevertheless have added lustre to their country and to human nature by the most powerful virtuous exertions.

The privileges of the British nobility, when compared with those of the noblesse of France before the Revolution, will in general be found at once more valuable and less invidious: they are ascertained by the known laws of the land, fully understood, and, for the most part, cheerfully acquiesced in.

The most important of those privileges consists in the hereditary share they have in the legislature; not in their forming a part of the pageantry of a court, or in having their lands exempt from taxation.

The peers of Great Britain are few in number. The

and cumbersome, that it tended to check and depress the natural and most useful vegetation of the soil; for in that country the airs of superiority, which the most petulant part of the nobility were apt to assume, were more difficult to repress, and were apparent in every place. Even at the table of the citizen, the deportment of monsieur le comte or marquis often reminded the entertainer of the honour done him by their condescending to accept of his entertainment. The smile of protection, the proud politeness, the gesture, the tone, and a thousand circumstances, marked the vast distance that was conceived to be between them, and told him as distinctly as any language, that, although he had dug a fortune from the dirty mines of commerce, he must still preserve a slavish submission in the company of gentlemen. The lowest of the noblesse disclaimed all connection with the highest roturier; no cordial bond of union, no reciprocation of good offices, no friendship, could subsist between the two ranks. They were two distinct planets, one of which disdained to be connected with, or influenced by, the motions of the other; the interval between them being filled with an atmosphere of repulsive particles which kept the two spheres asunder, and prevented their moving harmoniously in the same system.

The comparative moderation and unassuming behaviour observable in the British nobility towards their fellow citizens, is not to be imputed so much to any original difference in their disposition from that of those of the same cast in France or other countries, as to the government and customs of England, which do not tolerate that degree of insolence that was formerly displayed with impunity in France, and still continues in other countries in Europe: for although we see men in this country of high rank, who take as warm an interest in the general rights of their countrymen, and in the maintenance of the British constitution, as in any private rights of their own—men who have such a horror at oppression that no degree of power could render them tyrannical—yet we are not certain that

even these men would have possessed this degree of equity, if they had not been educated under impartial laws.

The usual effect of a tyrannical and partial government is to render the powerful unfeeling, and the weak abject. 'Les esclaves,' says Rousseau, 'perdent tout dans leur servitude, jusqu'au desir d'en sortir; comme les compagnons d'Ulisse aimoient leur abrutissement.' *

That this natural effect did not continue to operate in France, was owing to the numerous writings which have appeared in the language of that country, and particularly those of Rousseau himself. Those writings, in which the debasing influence of despotism and the happy effects of liberty were exhibited in the most glowing language, with other incidental causes, continuing to act on the heated and elastic minds of Frenchmen, at last overcame all compression, and produced an explosion of wide and lamentable devastation.

To arrest the ruinous effects of this, and prevent other events of the same nature, requires more wisdom and delicacy than any thing which ever engaged the attention of those who are intrusted with the government of the different nations of Europe.

The embers of this eruption, which have been thrown, for example, on a soil fortunately so ill adapted to their reception as that of England, would, it is probable, cool of themselves without any other mischief than the detested odour of their exhalation; whereas, if, from an imprudent zeal to disperse them, they should be stirred with violence, they may communicate their fire and spread new flames.

To return to our subject.—It may reasonably be believed, that the numbers of the noblesse of France might have been restricted, and some of their privileges removed, with more security to the constitution which was afterwards established, than was produced by abolishing the

* Slaves, says Rousseau, are so debased by their situation, that they lose all sentiment, even the desire of being emancipated; like the companions of Ulysses, who loved the brutal state into which they were sunk.

order altogether. But it is evident, that there was so great a difference between the situation of the peerage of Great Britain and that of the noblesse of France, that the same person who is of opinion that the abolition of the privileges of the latter was necessary for the freedom and happiness of France, may also be convinced, that the maintenance of those of the former is a security for the freedom and happiness of Great Britain.

CHAPTER VII.

The Assembly of the States-General—Jealousies—Disputes respecting the Verification of the Powers of the Deputies—The King attempts to conciliate the Three Orders—The Tiers-Etat postpone his Compromise—Artful Proposal of the Clergy—Eluded by the Commons—The Solicitude of the King—The Tiers-Etat proceed to the Verification of the Returns without the other two Orders, and assume the Legislative Government—Dispute concerning the Name the Assembly should assume—Observations and Discourses of Mirabeau.

A LITTLE before the meeting of the states-general, and during the heat and commotion which elections and party animosity always produce in a populous city, a catastrophe of a melancholy nature took place, the source of which has never been clearly ascertained.

A man of an excellent character, of the name of Reveillon, carried on an immense paper manufactory in the suburb of St. Antoine, by which he employed a great number of the poor in that quarter. A report was spread that he intended to diminish the wages of the workmen; and what rendered this more alarming to these poor people and their families, there was a scarcity of bread at the time in which this rumour arose. The bare falsehood was soon accompanied with many additional and aggravating circumstances, and particularly certain expressions of an insulting nature to the distresses of the poor were repeated as having been used by M. Reveillon.

Although nothing could be more opposite to the general conduct and character of the man, these rumours were readily believed by the unthinking multitude.

They dragged the figure of a man with a label around the neck, inscribed with the name of Reveillon and with the offensive words he was said to have uttered, to the Place de Greve, and there performed the ceremony of an execution. Having passed the night in drinking and riot, they went the following day and burst into M. Reveillon's house, destroyed his furniture, burnt his books and papers, broke into his cellars, increasing their fury by renewed intoxication.

There had been a relaxation in the police of Paris unknown before that period, during the whole time occupied in the elections. The lieutentant of police, from timidity or negligence, had taken no measure for crushing this insurrection at the beginning. A party of soldiers, too weak for the purpose, were sent when it was too late, to protect the house of M. Reveillon; they were repulsed by the pillagers. A large body of the French and Swiss guards then marched against them with two pieces of artillery. After having in vain summoned the mob around the house to retire, the commanding officer ordered the soldiers to fire over the heads of the multitude, in the hope that it would have intimidated and dispersed them. It had a contrary effect: the multitude pelted the guards with stones from the streets, the windows, and the top of the house. By a second fire the enraged soldiers killed a considerable number of the rabble; and then, rushing into the house, put all to the sword whom they found in the rooms or in the cellars. The scene was horrible; above one hundred of the populace are said to have been slaughtered; a considerable number of the military were wounded, and a few killed.

It has been repeatedly asserted by one party, that the source of this melancholy affair was a manœuvre of the court, to furnish a pretext for ordering so large a body of

troops near the capital and Versailles as would overawe the populace, and render the assembly of the states more complaisant to the view of the court than they were supposed to be.

On the other hand the partisans of the court have asserted, that the insurrection was excited, at a great expense of money, by certain leaders of the popular party, on purpose to shew the people their own strength and the weakness of government, and to intimidate the king into acquiescence with their measures.

As neither party have been able to establish their assertions on any thing like proof, the probability is, that both are unfounded; and that the commotion which was attended with such fatal consequences originated either in private malice against M. Reveillon, or simply in a false report hastily believed by a profligate populace, whose natural credulity was sharpened by the scarcity of bread and the hope of pillage.

When a nation is divided in opinion on subjects which heat the understanding and inflame the passions, there is hardly any wickedness of which one party is not capable of accusing the other; and by these reciprocal accusations of crimes, which perhaps neither was capable of committing, they become familiarized with ideas which they never before entertained, and are gradually prepared for deeds which they would otherwise have shrunk from with horror.

On the day of the assembling of the states-general, the deputies attended the king to the church of St. Lewis at Versailles, where they heard a sermon preached by the bishop of Nancy. The drift of this discourse was to prove, that all wise legislators had cherised religion, as the purest source of happiness to nations, or, as he expressed it, la source unique et intarissable de leur prosperité. The sermon was abundantly interspersed with praises of the king; and the queen was apostrophized in the following terms.—'Fille des Césars, emule et confidante des bien-

faits de ton auguste epoux !' * There is certainly nothing extraordinary in a bishop's praising religion in a church, or a king and queen in a sermon preached before themselves; but it is a subject of melancholy reflection to think how all the three have been treated since by some of those who heard their praises with applause at the time; and it is impossible not to imagine, that if the French nation had not been deprived of all regard for the first, they never would have behaved in the barbarous manner they did to the two last. It is likewise worthy of notice, that the state in which the inhabitants of France have been since they lost religious impressions, is no refutation of the bishop's doctrine.

From the church the king went to the hall appointed for the states. He was seated on a throne erected for the purpose, the queen placing herself at his side on a seat not so high as that of the king; the royal family were seated around: the clergy on one side of the hall, and the noblesse on the other; the tiers-etat at the bottom.

Such an assembly, the representatives of a great nation, and, above all, the purpose for which they were convened, to reform long-continued and severely-felt abuses, and to make regulations on which the happiness of millions of human beings in a great measure depended, must have produced warm emotion, and raised the highest expectation.

The king pronounced a discourse adapted to the occasion, which was followed by one from the keeper of the seals; and the meeting concluded with a very long one from N. Necker, which however was more attended to than either of the other two.

Considering the different views, interests, and prejudices of the auditory, M. Necker must have possessed more address than falls to the lot of humanity, to have composed a discourse which would have entirely pleased an audience whose views and wishes were so different,

* Daughter of the Cæsars! You who emulate and are the confidante of the benevolent actions of your august husband!

and the minds of many of them so ill disposed towards the speaker. The nobles looked on him as a low-born upstart, who by intrigue and talents fit for a counting-house had wriggled himself into a situation to which he had no right; the clergy were jealous of him as a Protestant: and as M. Necker's discourse did not point directly to the object aimed at by the deputies of the tiers-etat, whose views were the most exalted, they also were displeased with it; and they would have been still more so, if they had not perceived that it displeased the noblesse and the clergy.

There existed a great jealousy in the three orders which composed the assembly; two of them dreading to be stripped of privileges they had long enjoyed, and the third being filled with indignation at the degradation and oppression under which they had long suffered: to this original jealousy, which already burned with two great heat in the breasts of some of the deputies, certain circumstances of a frivolous nature served as additional fuel. In the ceremonial of presenting the deputies to the king, a distinction, which it would have been wiser to have omitted, was made between the two first orders and the third. In admitting the clergy and noblesse, both foldings of the door were thrown open, and they were received by the king in his cabinet: but in admitting the deputies of the tiers-etat the opening of one-half of the door was thought sufficient; and they were received by his majesty in a kind of anti-chamber. This circumstance of the door might have been thought equally unpolite, but it would not have been quite so imprudent, if the tiers-etat had not previously obtained a double representation.

Such distinctions may be proper for keeping up the idea of superiority, when neither the superiority itself nor the power of supporting it is to be called in question; but when the first is disputed, and the second declining, they had best not be brought forward. The very circumstance of the states-general being summoned was of itself a proof that the tiers-etat were not to be treated with the ap-

pearance of indignity. Insolence, when supported by power, is mean; without that support it is ridiculous. Instead of permitting any appearance of that kind, the court would have done well to have considered the state of the public mind at the time: that those to whom the marks of disregard were shewn, formed, by the concession of the king himself, one-half of the assembly, and were the representatives of the majority of the nation—a nation distinguished for spirit and ingenuity, among whom science and the arts had been cultivated with nearly *as much* success even in the opinion of their greatest rival, with *more* in the opinion of the rest of Europe, and with *a great deal more* in their own opinion, than in any other country in the world: that those men came fraught with the idea, that they had been oppressed by the court, insulted by the nobles, imposed on by the clergy, and were instructed by their constituents to require redress.—Had these considerations been duly attended to, every invidious and unnecessary distinction, and every circumstance which could be conceived to add irritation to minds already highly irritated, and too ready perhaps to construe things indifferent in themselves into cause of provocation, would have been avoided.

The dress of ceremony prescribed for the different orders afforded matter of offence also: that of the noblesse and higher clergy was of itself pompous, which some of them spared no expense in rendering still more magnificent by additional ornaments; that of the tiers-etat consisted simply of the little black cloak worn by lawyers, which, when attached to the shoulders of those who did not wear black, had a preposterous and mean appearance. But when it was observed that this was a subject of ridicule to some of the noblesse, the people, however disposed they may be in general to laugh at pitiful jokes, obstinately refused to give any encouragement to this, and shewed the highest respect for the motley-clothed deputies, cheering them with repeated shouts of Vive le tiers-etat! while they allowed their splendid rivals to pass in

procession unnoticed. So that in a short time a little black cloak on a brown thread-bare coat became respectable; and afterwards, when the cloaks were laid aside, on the conversion of the states-general into a national-assembly, a great plainness or rather shabbiness of dress was, upon the same principle, considered as a presumption of patriotism.

This might have served as a warning to administration and the clergy to be exceedingly cautious how they proceeded; for after the nation had proved, by this instance, that they were capable of a sudden and complete change of opinion on a subject which had always occupied them so much as that of dress, it was to be expected that they might alter their way of thinking, with still greater ease, on matters which hitherto had appeared to be of far less importance to them,—namely, government and religion.

Before the assembly could proceed to the business for which it was convoked, the verification of the powers of the deputies was necessary, and for this purpose their writs of return were to be examined. The nobility and clergy proposed, that this should be done by each of the orders separately, in a chamber appropriated for itself: but the third estate were of a different way of thinking; for although they had gained the point of a double representation, they knew that the court partly expected that it would be rendered of little importance, by the resolution the nobles and clergy had formed not to vote by poll, but by orders, each invested with the privilege of putting a negative on the decision of the other two. M. Necker himself had, in his discourse at the opening of the assembly, talked in such equivocal terms on this head, that each party might have imagined he favoured their wishes. Yet that they should guard against voting by orders, and secure the point of voting by poll, formed a principal article in the instructions of many deputies for the third estate; and they were aware, that if a precedent were once established of doing business of any kind separately, that single instance might prove decisive of the

question. When they assembled in the common hall, therefore, they resolved that the three orders should verify their powers together; and finding that the nobles and clergy did not join them, they separated without proceeding to the verification of their own powers: and when they met afterwards, they declared it was only as individuals, without any political character or right to act; and that they waited for the two other orders in the common hall, that the verification of their powers might be made in the only valid way, when all were present.

In this state things continued for several weeks; the noblesse and clergy meeting in their respective halls, and the deputies of the third estate assembling daily in the common hall, but abstaining from their verifying powers on account of the absence of the other orders.

The commons, having the voice and affections of the vast majority of the nation with them, and being convinced that this circumstance must render them victorious, made a shew of great temper and moderation. They sent repeated messages to the nobles, in the most respectful terms, inviting them to the hall, that the great interests of the nation might not be retarded. Receiving no satisfactory answer from them, the commons sent a deputation to the clergy, inviting them to the common hall, that they might mutually deliberate on the most effectual means of restoring tranquillity and happiness to the nation. On this occasion the commons conjured the clergy to agree to their request *in the name of the God of Peace.* This form of entreaty was adopted as peculiarly applicable to those who called themselves the servants of the God of Peace, and in the belief that it could not be rejected without their being thought disrespectful to their master, and of course without being of prejudice to them in the minds of the people.

The clergy, who were sensible of the value of popularity in the present exigency, and who considered the pathetic terms of the exhortation as turning their own artillery against them, determined to retaliate, by pushing

the commons into a troublesome dilemma, and perhaps stealing from them some of their popularity. For this purpose they sent a deputation to the third estate, lamenting the miserable condition of the people, arising from the high price of bread, and proposing that a committee, drawn from each of the three orders, should be appointed to concert the speediest means for alleviating the distresses of the poor.

The clergy thought it would be difficult to elude a proposal, whose object was to relieve the distresses of the people; and knew at the same time, that a committee appointed in the manner they proposed would have sanctioned, in a great measure, future deliberations in which the distinction of orders should be preserved—which was precisely what the two superior classes had in view: and the clergy were in hopes that the commons would be driven either to consent to agree to the committee, or run the risk of displeasing the people by refusing to concur with such a benevolent measure.

The third estate were not caught by the snare that was laid for them. Comprehending fully all that was intended by this proposition, they precluded its consequences by the following answer to the clergy.—'Penetrated with the same sense of duty that you are, and affected even to tears at the distress of the people, we entreat and conjure you to *unite instantly with us in the common hall*, to concert measures for the remedy of these calamities.'

Instead of hastening to meet the commons with the expedition which their message and the urgency of the case imported, the clergy returned for answer, that they would continue to meditate on the properest means of relieving the distresses of the poor, which they acknowledged to be an object of the most important and interesting nature, and which they had infinitely at heart, but that most unfortunately there was not a sufficient number of deputies present in their hall to decide on so weighty a business.

Each party, perceiving that their real designs were seen, dropped any farther use of pretexts which deceived nei-

ther; the name of the God of Peace was no more mentioned; the high price of bread gave no farther uneasiness; and the poor were left in the same distress as before.

In the meantime the king seemed to have the general prosperity more at heart, and to be more ready to make sacrifices for obtaining it, than any of the three orders: for while two of them were obstinately insisting on verifying the powers of the deputies apart, and the third declaring that it should be done together, other important business was suspended, to the great loss of the public; and besides, in plain common sense, it would seem, that no particular order, nor all the three orders united, could with propriety verify the powers of the deputies. This right evidently belonged to the king. The assembly of the states had been called by his proclamation; it belonged to him to examine whether the deputies had been elected according to the terms of the proclamation. It would appear absolutely requisite, that he should authorize those at least who were to begin the verification; for with what propriety could men scrutinize or verify the powers of their brother deputies, whose own powers had not been examined and verified? Without insisting, however, on what seemed to be his right, he proposed, as a conciliatory measure, that they should verify their powers separately, communicate the verification to each other; and, in case any disputable matter should arise on which they could not agree, he offered to be the umpire.

The noblesse and clergy agreed to the king's proposals, and appointed commissaries to meet with those of the commons; who on their part, without directly rejecting the compromise, declared that they postponed their final decision until they should receive the report of their commissioners after the conference. It was evident that they were resolved it should come to nothing: new matter of dispute arose, as was predetermined, at the conferences which were held in presence of the minister; and the king's mediation, to his great mortification, proved ineffectual.

With an aversion to intrigues of every kind, and little relish for the magnificence of a court or the exercise of power, the good-natured prince supremely desired the happiness of his subjects and his own tranquillity. He had long endeavoured to moderate the dissensions of the contending parties; and their increasing animosity greatly afflicted his mind. 'Je n'ai eu depuis quelques années que *des instans* de bonheur,' said he to M. Necker, speaking of the violence of the parties and their reciprocal accusations, and perhaps under the general apprehension of some of the subsequent evils. As to the complicated and unexampled atrocities that have taken place since, they could not have entered into his imagination, or scarcely into that of the most gloomy-minded prophet of evil that ever lived.

It is painful to reflect, that a prince so averse from disturbing the peace of others should have his own so cruelly destroyed; while those who, from ambitious or selfish views, anxiously seek for a cause of discord, cry havock and let loose the dogs of war, are permitted to pass their lives in luxurious ease.

There was this striking difference between the conduct of the noblesse and the tiers-etat, that the latter, by persisting in a plan of apparent moderation and even inactivity, allowed their popularity, or, in other words, their power, to increase; whereas the former swelled in the pride of their pretensions as their power dwindled, and proceeded to the verification of the powers of their deputies in their own particular hall, and to other acts, as if they were a complete and legal assembly; without considering that they thereby weakened themselves on the side on which the most dangerous attack was to be expected, and where they were already too weak. While they thus ruined their own popularity, they increased that of the third order, and furnished them with an example, which they followed as soon as they thought they would be supported by the approbation of the public.

Having made a new effort for the union of the orders

by summoning all the deputies, including those of the noblesse and clergy, they declared that they would proceed to the verification of the returns; and after that ceremony, those deputies whose powers should be then verified in the common hall would be constituted a legal assembly, and would instantly assume the legislative authority.

On the 13th of June they accordingly began to call the deputies, and to verify the powers of those who appeared; in which number were none of the order of nobility, and only three of that of the clergy. A few more of the latter joined them the following day: and on the 17th of the same month the tiers-etat, with this small junction from the clergy, assumed to themselves the legislative government of France, amidst the applause of a prodigious multitude of spectators.

This great and important act of power met with no opposition; but when the title which the assembly should assume came to be mentioned, a long debate ensued, which was carried on with more heat than could have been expected from the subject. On this occasion the speakers displayed such powers of verbal criticism, and such a degree of dialectic subtlety and metaphysical discrimination, as is more suitable to grammarians and professors than to statesmen and legislators. One member proposed, that the assembly should be denominated 'Assemblée légitime des représentans de la majeure partie de la nation, agissant en l'absence de la mineure partie.' Others proposed titles still more tedious and complex. The abbé Sieyes recommended the following.—'Assemblée des représentans connus et verifiés de la nation Françoise;' and supported it with much metaphysical ingenuity.

In the reply which Mirabeau made to the abbé's arguments, he shewed the inconvenience which might arise from applying metaphysics to the exercise of government or legislation. The following extract from Mirabeau's discourse is no bad specimen of his eloquence. Mirabeau recommended the simple name of 'Representatives of the

French people,' acknowledging that those proposed by the abbé Sieyes and others were more conformable to certain theoretical opinions, and what might be expected from philosophers and metaphysicians. It would have been happy for the French nation, that the assembly in forming their constitution had paid more attention to the following remark made by Mirabeau on this occasion.—' Il est cette différence essentielle entre le metaphysicien, qui, dans la meditation du cabinet, saisit la verité dans son energique pureté, et l'homme d'état qui est obligé de tenir compte des antécédens, des difficultés, des obstacles; il est, dis-je, cette différence entre l'instructeur du peuple et l'administrateur politique, que l'un ne songe qu'à *ce qui est*, et l'autre s'occuppe de *ce qui peut etre.*

' Le metaphysicien, voyageant sur une mappe-monde, franchit tout sans peine, ne s'embarrasse ni des montagnes, ni des déserts, ni des fleuves, ni des abymes; mais quand on veut realiser le voyage, quand on veut arriver au but, il faut se rappeller sans cesse qu'on marche sur la terre, et qu'on n'est plus dans le monde idéal.' *

After a long discussion, however, the name of national assembly was proposed by M. le Grand, and adopted by the majority; on which the hall resounded with the cry of Vivent le roi et l'assemblée nationale!

This debate, respecting the name by which the assembly was to be called, reminds us of the dispute which took place in the year 1689 between the peers and commons of England, on the words *abdicated* and *deserted*; which, however, was not merely verbal; for it is more

* There is an essential difference between the metaphysician who in his study seizes truth in all its energetic purity, and the statesman who is obliged to consider antecedents, difficulties, obstacles; there is this difference, I say, between the instructor of the people and the political administrator, that the one only thinks of what really is, and the other of what may be.

The metaphysician, travelling on the map, passes over mountains, deserts, rivers, and abysses, without difficulty; but he who intends to make the journey in good earnest, must keep constantly in his mind, that he is to travel on this earth, and not in an ideal world.

conformable with tory principles to declare, that a king, in consequence of mal-administration and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, had *deserted* the government, than that he had *abdicated* it; the tories, therefore, contended strenuously for the former. The genuine whig principle dictated the decisive word *forfeited*, as preferable to either; and accordingly that word was adopted by the Scottish parliament, which kept no measures with the tories of their country: but the English whigs, as Hume remarks, having been joined by the tories in bringing about the revolution, waved a word which was offensive to them, and, by way of compromise, used *abdicated* —to which the tories of the House of Peers were at last pleased to agree.

The word *peuple* having by the French been long applied to the lowest order only, it was considered by many members as lowering the deputies to denominate them *Représentans du Peuple François.* Mirabeau, having observed this, added,—' Je suis peu inquiet de la signification des mots dans la langue absurde du préjugé; je parle ici la langue de la liberté, et je m'appuye sur l'exemple des Anglois, sur celui des Américains, qui ont toujours honoré le nom de *peuple*, qui l'ont toujours consacré dans leurs declarations, dans leurs lois, dáns leurs politique. Quand Chatham renferma dans un seul mot la charte des nations, et dit la *majesté du peuple*; quand les Americains ont opposé les droits naturels du peuple à tout le fatras des publicistes sur les conventions qu'on leur oppose; ils ont reconnu toute la signification, toute l'energie de cette expression, à qui la liberté donne tant de valeur.' *

* I give no weight to the signification of words according to the absurd language of prejudice; I here speak the language of liberty, and am supported by the example of the English and of the Americans, who have always respected the name of the *people*, and have always adopted it in their declarations, in their laws, and in their politics. When Chatham compressed the charter of nations in a single expression, and pronounced the *majesty of the people*; when the Americans opposed the *natural rights of the people* to all the trash published against them; they showed that they understood

In another discourse he acknowledges, that the word *Peuple* was often understood to have the same signification with *Vulgus* in Latin, *Mob* in English, what the aristocrates in France insolently called *Canaille;* and for that very reason he prefers the *title* of Représentans du *Peuple* François to any other denomination for the assembly. ' Je persevére dans ma motion,' continued he, ' et dans la seule expression qu'on en avoit attaquée; je veux dire la qualification du *Peuple François.* Je l'adopte, je la defends, je la proclame, par la raison qui la fait combattre.

' Oui: c'est parce que le nom de peuple n'est pas assez respecté en France; parce qu'il est obscurci, couvert de la rouille du préjugé; parce qu'il nous présente une idée dont l'orgueil s'allarme et dont la vanité se révolte; parce qu'il est prononcé avec mépris dans les chambres des aristocrates; c'est pour cela même, messieurs, que je voudrois, c'est pour cela même ques nous devons nous imposer, non seulment de le relever, mais de l'ennoblir, de le rendre désormais respectable aux ministres et cher à tous les cœurs.

' Plus habiles que nous, les héros Bataves qui fondèrent la liberté de leurs pays prirent le nom de Gueux: ils ne voulurent que ce titre, parce que le mépris de leurs tyrans avoit prétendu les en flétrir; et ce titre, en leur attachant cette classe immense que l'aristocratie et le despotisme avilissoient, fut à la fois leur force, leur gloire, et le gage de leur succès. Les amis de la liberté choisissent le nom qui les sert le mieux, et non celui qui les flatte le plus; ils s'appelleront les remontrans en Amérique, les Pâtres en Suisse, les Gueux dans les Pays-Bas; ils se pareront des injures de leurs ennemis; ils leur ôteront le pouvoir de les humilier avec des expressions dont ils auront su s'honorer.'*

understood the true signification and full energy of an expression, to which freedom gives so great a value.

* I persist in my motion, and in the only expression which is found fault with: I mean that of *the French People.* I adopt it, I defend it, I proclaim it, for the very reasons for which it is attacked.

Yes:

CHAPTER VIII.

Mirabeau—Resolutions of the National Assembly—Different Conduct of the different Orders—Inflexible and unfeeling Behaviour of the Tiers-Etat—Imprudent Conduct of the higher Clergy—Popularity of the inferior Clergy—Libels, Lampoons—Universal Prejudice against the Nobles and Clergy—Reflections on the different Light in which the French Revolution is viewed by those in different Situations all over Europe—Mirabeau's Journal—Conference between him and M. Necker.

MIRABEAU had offended many persons of weight in the order to which he himself belonged, by his extravagances and profligacy, more by his satirical wit, and most of all by a superiority of genius which they could neither contest nor brook. Perceiving that he had no chance of being chosen a deputy to the states-general by the noblesse, he immediately used his endeavours to be chosen by the tiers-etat. His endeavours were successful: he not only was chosen a deputy for Aix en Provence and Marseilles, that very part of France which had been the scene of his youthful follies, and where his character was best known, but he also acquired a degree of popularity among his constituents, which was never surpassed, and which he

Yes: it is because the name of *the People* is not sufficiently respected in France; because it is obscured and covered with the rust of prejudice; because it conveys an idea which wounds pride and mortifies vanity; because it is mentioned with disdain in the houses of aristocrates; it is for those very reasons that I adopt it—it is for those very reasons that we ought to assume it, ennoble it, and render it respectable in the eyes of ministers and at courts.

Those heroes who founded the liberty of Holland, more judicious than we, took the name of Gueux (beggars); and they would have no other title, because the pride of their tyrants made them imagine they would be lowered by it: and *that* very title, by attaching to them that immense class which aristocracy and despotism vilify, became at once their strength, their glory, and the pledge of their success. The friends of liberty chose the name which would best serve her cause, not that which was most flattering to themselves. In Switzerland, they assumed the name of Herdsmen; in the Low Countries, that of Beggars; glorying in the injurious appellations of their enemies, and receiving their abuse, not as what could humble them, but as that which did them honour.

retained unimpaired till his death. In general he enjoyed the same popularity in the capital, though during some short intervals he lost it to such a degree, that the populace of Paris called him a traitor, and threatened him with the lanterne; particularly when he opposed the decree excluding the ministers from being members of the national assembly, that concerning the king's veto, and a third on the right of declaring war and making peace; yet perhaps he never had more reason on his side, nor did he ever act more in conformity with the political principles which he always professed than on those occasions; for Mirabeau was not a republican.

The knowledge he had of the temper and character of his countrymen, of the history of republics ancient and modern; his own reflections on the internal commotions that existed during even the most brilliant periods of the Roman commonwealth, the only one which could with propriety be adduced as an example to so extensive a country as France; the favourable idea he had of the British constitution; all those considerations determined his mind in favour of a limited monarchy. But as no man ever possessed in a superior degree the art of gaining the confidence of the people, and of leading a popular assembly; and as his own importance and power depended on the importance of that class who were neither nobility nor clergy, he wished to raise them from the debasing light in which they had been long viewed in France, and to secure to them a reasonable degree of power and respect. In contending that the assembly should adopt the name of *Représentans du Peuple*, he certainly meant no more. He who disliked a government like the ancient Roman republic, because it was composed of a senate and people only,* must have been more averse to one in which the people alone were sovereign, which pretended to annihilate all distinctions of rank, and to establish an insipid equality, in which the superiority of talent, which peculiarly distinguished himself, would be considered as

* Senatus Populusque Romanus.

a species of aristocracy that might lead to the guillotine.

It was unfortunate for France that Mirabeau was not on good terms with M. Necker: if he had, the talents and address of the former, co-operating with the good intentions and correcting the theories of the latter, as they were both friends to freedom, and neither wished for a republic, a practicable government, of a monarchical form and founded on freedom, might have been formed: or at any rate, had Mirabeau lived a few years longer than he did, his discernment would have detected, and his powerful ridicule would have exposed, the folly of those visionary politicians, who, travelling over the world on a map, like his metaphysician, regardless of mountains and rivers, declared that all power came from the people, neglecting to establish at the same time, that the people could exercise no part of that power but must delegate the whole. His triumphant eloquence, it is probable, would have precluded the absurd title of *Peuple Souverain*, and the mischievous ideas which have attended it; he would have been able to convince the national assembly and the nation at large, that although those princes who possessed arbitrary power were often cruel and tyrannical, yet it sometimes happened that they were the reverse; whereas le peuple souverain, acting individually and not by representatives, had ever been in all ages and in all countries an unrelenting savage; that the natural impetuosity of the French national character gave no reason to expect, that he would reign with more moderation in France than elsewhere; but that, as soon as he should obtain that title and the power which it implies, the innate violence and fury of his disposition would appear; that he would brandish his pike, overawe the national assembly, plunge the superior orders into the mire from which he himself had just emerged, murder those who had raised him to power, and overwhelm the land with bloodshed and terror. Such are the horrors which the penetrating genius of Mirabeau, foreseeing, would have prevented; and they will warn other nations

still labouring under despotism, what they have carefully to avoid in their exertions to obtain a free government.

After a discussion which occupied more time, and occasioned more heat, than could have been expected from the mere question of a name for the assembly, that *of national assembly* was adopted. The members having taken the oath to fulfil their duty to their country with fidelity, a declaration was made, that the national assembly being composed of members delegated by an *immense majority of the French nation*, would remain no longer inactive on account of the absent deputies or of any particular class of men, but would immediately begin the great work of reformation, for which they had been appointed by their country.

They pronounced, that no tax or imposition was legal that was not confirmed or enacted by the representatives of the nation. That nevertheless, to prevent confusion, the existing taxes should be continued to be levied until they were annulled by the assembly, or until the assembly separated. They declared that they would, in concert with his majesty, take the national debt into consideration as soon as possible; and in the meantime they put the national creditors under the safeguard of the national faith and honour.

These resolutions were heard with applause by the numerous spectators; they were carried with all possible expedition to the capital, where they produced the strongest symptoms of joy, which became universal over the nation; for those who were dissatisfied and alarmed at the proceedings, were obliged to conceal their sentiments in this moment of enthusiasm.

By this act of supremacy without the concurrence of the two other orders, and without waiting for the approbation of the king, they decided the question which had not been yet agitated, namely, whether the national assembly should vote individually or by the united voice of each order. They acted not as part of an assembly of men delegated to remedy certain abuses in an existing govern-

ment, but as a complete assembly authorized to form a new government. In effect, they assumed the whole power of the state.

It has been said, that a different conduct on the part of the two higher orders would have prevented the third from adopting so violent a measure. The same kind of reflection hardly ever fails to be made, when any conduct whatever has unfortunate consequences. As that which the nobles and clergy pursued has led to their ruin, it is now clear that they would have been no losers by choosing another. When they saw that the tiers, with the approbation of the people, were determined that the powers of all the deputies should be verified in common, perhaps it would have had a happy and conciliatory effect not to have disputed that point; their meeting and conversing daily together might have confirmed their union; whereas the refusal of the two first orders to meet at all became a fresh source of jealousy and hatred, and was perhaps the cause of their being deprived of some privileges which they might have been allowed to retain.

The joy manifested by the nation at the decisive conduct of the tiers-etat tended to give them at once fresh courage and additional strength; whereas it only gave to the other two orders fresh indignation, of which they possessed a sufficient quantity before, and tended to diminish their strength, of which they had not enough.

As the noblesse and the clergy had rallied under the court, were directed in many points by the king's ministers, and belonged in general to that class of society in which the violence of private passion is more under the restraints of interest or decorum, it might naturally have been expected that they would have conducted themselves with more policy, unanimity, and energy than the third. The fact, however, was otherwise. We find the nobles and the clergy divided among themselves, acting without system or courage, affecting an importance which they no longer had, and making claims which they were afterwards obliged to relinquish; whereas the commons, from

the first meeting of the states-general until the union of the three orders, never advanced a step which they afterwards retracted, never turned to the right hand or to the left, but moved on stedfast to their object, making good every new right which they claimed, although most of them were at first refused, and some of them shockingly ill-timed. Of the last the following is a remarkable example.

Soon after the assembly of the states-general, and during that interval in which the tiers-etat seemed to be patiently waiting the moment when the two other orders would unite with them, it was observed that, on sending a deputation to the king, the deputies of the third order were received by the keeper of the seals, who according to ancient custom carried their requests to the king, whereas deputations from the noblesse and clergy were received by the king in person; the third order resolved to put an end to this distinction, and for that purpose appointed a new deputation—ordering at the same time their dean, M. Bailly, to wait on his majesty in person, and inform him that the commons acknowledged no intermediate person between the king and his people, and begged to know the time when their deputation should wait on him.

The young dauphin died on the day when M. Bailly endeavoured to fulfil his commission. When the officer in waiting announced him, the king sent him word to communicate his business in the usual way through the keeper of the seals. M. Bailly then waited on the minister, who having addressed the king on the subject, received the following answer.—

'Il m'est impossible, dans les circonstances où je me trouve, de voir M. Bailly ce soir, ou demain matin, ni de fixer un jour pour la députation. Montrez mon billet à M. Bailly pour sa decharge.'*

* It is not possible for me, in my present state of mind, to see M. Bailly this evening or to-morrow morning, nor ca I at present fix an hour

When this billet was read in the assembly of the commons, it excited murmurs of discontent. These murmurs, however unreasonable they were, seem to have made an impression at the court; for soon after M. Bailly received a letter in these terms.—' M. le garde des sceaux prévient M. Bailly qu'il sort de chez le roi, où il étoit monté pour prendre ses ordres sur la députation. Quoique sa majesté soit dans la plus profonde affliction, et que jusqu'ici elle n'ait voulu voir personne, le roi recevra cependant demain la députation du tiers-etat entre onze heures et midi; son intention est que la députation soit au nombre de vingt.' *

The deputation waited on the king accordingly. Its avowed object was to represent the earnest desire of the third order to unite with the other two, and to complain of the obstacles by which the nobles prevented this union, and thereby retarded public business. In the address, which was pronounced by M. Bailly, the commons also declared that they gloried in their attachment to the person of the king, and that they would be at all times ready to shed their blood and spend their fortunes in support of the true principles of the monarchy. The concluding words were,—' Vos fidelles communes sont profondement touchées de la circonstance où votre majesté a la bonté de recevoir leur députation; et elles prennent la liberté de lui adresser l'expression de tous leurs regrets, et de leur respectueuse sensibilité.' †

hour for receiving the deputation. Shew my note to M. Bailly for his justification.

* The keeper of the seals informs M. Bailly, that he is just come from the king, on whom he had waited to receive his orders respecting the deputation. Notwithstanding his majesty's being in the greatest affliction, and that hitherto he has not been able to see any body, he will receive the deputation of the tiers-etat to-morrow between eleven and twelve o'clock. He expects that the deputation shall consist of twenty.

† Your faithful commons are deeply affected at the circumstances in which your majesty had the goodness to receive their deputation; and they take the liberty of expressing to you this testimony of their regret and most respectful sympathy.

This address, under the circumstances in which it was made, will not be considered as a convincing proof of the respectful sensibility of those who framed it for the king's affliction; but it is a pretty strong one of the perseverance of the tiers-etat in their claims, even during circumstances in which most people will imagine that they might have been at least postponed.

Although the nobles did not act with all the steadiness and unanimity of the tiers-etat, there was but a small number who seceded from the general opinion of their order; but among the clergy there was a considerable portion whose wishes went not along with the general inclination of theirs. This was supposed to have been owing to the proud deportment of some of the dignitaries of the church, who, contrary to the spirit of the religion they professed, are said to have treated their brethren the inferior clergy with such neglect and apparent contempt, as to annihilate that *esprit de corps* which usually binds men of the same profession together, and inclined them to favour the tiers-etat, with many of whom they lived on the footing of equality and friendship. The unpopularity of the higher clergy appeared strongly during the election of the deputies, and occasioned a much greater proportion of the inferior class to be elected than would have taken place, had not the former destroyed their natural influence by an imprudent and haughty behaviour.

What the dignitaries of the church lost in popularity about this period, the lower orders of the clergy acquired, and retained until the government of the country was usurped by a set of men devoid of every sentiment of religion, gratitude, or compassion.

This did not escape the observation of those who composed the little pieces for the theatre, who of all authors are the most attentive in seizing the reigning fancy of the times, and gratifying the public taste: a country curé became all at once a favourite character on the stage, and was often brought forward as the vehicle of patriotic sen

timents. Sometimes M. le Curé was exhibited even in a more heroic point of view.

The best apology that can be made for the praise which is so often bestowed on princes and on men in power who do not deserve it, is, that it sometimes inspires them with a desire of becoming what they are said to be already. Thus we are told, that Augustus was flattered into humanity. In the same manner I have been assured, that many curés and parish priests, who at the beginning of the revolution were very cool on the subject, when they understood that they were represented on the stage as patriots and defenders of their country, at length caught fire, and became *what they beheld*,—inculcating revolutionary opinions on the minds of their parishioners, and sometimes leading them against detached parties of the enemy. I was myself present at the representation of a little piece in the year 1792, which I was told was founded in truth. The scene of the piece was a small village on the frontiers of France. While the curé is exhorting a group of the inhabitants to maintain their freedom and defend their country, news is brought that a party of hulans are at hand.; the curé immediately trusses up his black robe, girds on a sabre, seizes a musket, and marches at the head of his audience to meet the enemy. In the next scene he returns victorious, and is welcomed with songs of triumph by the wives and children of the band of villagers which has repulsed the invaders.

This popularity, however, was entirely confined to the inferior orders of ecclesiastics. The prejudice against the higher classes continued augmenting without interruption.

It was evident, from the conduct of the court immediately before the meeting of the states-general, from the ceremonies observed on that occasion, and even from the discourse of M. Necker on the first day of the assembly, that it was intended that a distinction of orders should be maintained, that the assembly should vote by orders, and

that each order should have the prerogative of putting a negative on the proceedings of the other two.

It is difficult to know what M. Necker's real sentiments were on this question. A fear of weakening his popularity might prevent his recommending the vote by orders; unwillingness to disoblige the court, and some dread of the violence of certain leading men in the tiers-etat, might hinder him from recommending the voting by poll. He recommended neither entirely, and yet he recommended both in some degree. He said there were some points on which it was preferable to vote by order, and others on which it would be most expedient to vote by individual voices. What he said in favour of voting by orders was greatly applauded by the nobles and clergy. This was ill judged; because it shewed the importance they put on that circumstance, and was an advertisement to the tiers-etat, had they needed it, to put an importance on it also.

In common sense, the stand which the court, the nobles, and clergy were making against voting by poll, and the dislike which M. Necker himself at last shewed to it, all came too late. Whatever opposition was intended ought to have been made against the tiers-etat having a double representation: after that was yielded, the opposition was much more difficult; it was first agreeing to admit the lion, and then attempting to muzzle him.*

Yet notwithstanding the decisive step which the tiers-etat, with such of the clergy as joined them, had taken on the 17th of June, the two higher orders continued their discussions in their respective chambers, and seemed still determined not to sanction the proceedings of the

* During the debates in the House of Commons in the reign of Charles II on the exclusion bill, some members who spoke against excluding the duke of York from the succession to the crown acknowledged, however, that they ought to limit his power when he should come to the throne; on which a member who was for the exclusion asked whether, if a lion was heard roaring in the lobby, it would be most prudent to admit him within the door and then muzzle him, or shut the door and exclude him?

third order with their presence, which they imagined was absolutely necessary to render them legal in the eyes of the nation. They might have been convinced that this conjecture was erroneous, by the satisfaction and joy which was exhibited all over France, on account of the decided measures of the tiers-etat, and the declarations made to support them. The Parisians turned the refusal of the nobles and clergy into ridicule; many epigrams were made on the subject: a song was sung in the streets, and all Paris joined in the chorus, which consisted of the following lines.—

Vive le tiers-etat de France!
Il aura la prépondérance
Sur le prince, sur le prélat:
Ahi! povera nobilita!

So sudden and so violent was the effect of this enthusiasm, and of the lampoons and libels which were scattered all over France against nobility, that what had been formerly considered as the greatest advantage, and without some pretensions to which, people were exposed to daily mortifications, was now almost looked on as a crime, and became in reality a misfortune. This want of candour was not confined to the populace, but reached many of the higher classes of the bourgeoisie, who joined in the outcry of prejudice, and spoke of the nobles as the most worthless of mankind, and the determined enemies of their country, for refusing to unite with the third order on the present occasion.

It has been already observed, that the nobles and clergy did not adopt the very best means for precluding or mitigating the attack with which they were threatened, and that their exertions to that purpose were not made at the proper time; but it seems the height of injustice to blame them for attempting some resistance, and for not surrendering all their privileges at discretion.

To expect that those on whom distinctions and privileges have devolved through a long series of ancestors will yield them up at the first call of public utility, even

were it clearly proved that public utility made the demand, is to expect more than infinitely the greater part of mankind would be willing in a similar situation to grant. Those who, without making any sacrifice to the public good, abuse others for not making the greatest, are seldom possessed of even an ordinary share of generosity or public spirit; and there is little doubt but that many of the flaming patriots of the third order, those who declaimed the loudest on the justice of their requisitions, and against the obstinate arrogance of the nobles, would, had they themselves been noble, have declaimed with equal violence against the absurd pretensions of those whom in that case they would have called insolent roturiers: they would not only have called them so, but it is highly probable they would have really *thought* all their requisitions unjust and unnatural. By contemplating political questions often in one point of view, men are very apt to be at last convinced that what is most favourable to their own private interest is also most for the interest of the public; and therefore there are not so many hypocrites, or men who speak and act contrary to the dictates of their understanding and conscience, in either party, as the violent partisans of each imagine.

If due weight were given to this remark, those men in every country of Europe who have viewed the French revolution in opposite lights, would not reciprocally accuse one another in the unqualified manner they usually do.

The nobles and dignified clergy, who enjoy great privileges and rich benefices: those who possess ample sinecure places under a government, of whatever nature that government may be; the whole race of bankers, to whom taxes are trifles; and all government contractors, who grow rich as the state becomes poor, are peculiarly averse to any alteration in the present arrangement of things, and of course to them the French revolution was an object of dread from the beginning. The oppression which the bulk of the French nation suffered from the nature of

their ancient government, those men imagined would never reach their own country; but the example given by the revolution, and all the horrors which accompanied it, they thought, if not opposed, would spread over all Europe. This being their conviction, nobody can be surprised at their lamenting an event which they thought pregnant with such extensive mischief.

Those men, on the other hand, who consider freedom as the greatest of human blessings, who have a strong sense of the miseries that flow from despotism, who behold with indignation the cruelty and arrogance with which dastardly power and unfeeling rank often treat the weak and the ingenious, men who, being acquainted with adversity, have a greater sympathy with the unfortunate, than those above mentioned; men of this description beheld the beginning of the French revolution with that complacency, which the expectation of seeing a large portion of their fellow creatures relieved from oppression naturally communicates. They saw its degeneracy with disappointment, grief, and horror; but were unwilling to lose the hope that some rational system of freedom, not the ancient tyranny, would arise out of that chaos of anarchy and bloodshed which it had produced: and they had no fear that the excesses committed by the most impetuous nation in Europe, on their being suddenly unchained, would be imitated by other nations, who were in different circumstances and of opposite characters. This being their conviction, what candid mind can blame them more than the former? And of two classes of men, whose different manner of thinking on this subject seems in general to depend merely on the different situations in which they are placed, why should the one accuse the other of a design to involve their country in a scene of anarchy, bloodshed, and rapine, and the second condemn the first as the enemies of freedom and the friends of tyranny? Both those classes, in Great Britain at least, as I am persuaded, love their country and hate tyranny: but the one are more afraid of a mob than of a stretch of prerogative;

and the other recollect that Wat Tyler and John Cade did not reign four months, whereas Henry VIII reigned thirty-eight years, and James II four.

During the sittings of the notables M. de Mirabeau had published several pamphlets, with a view to spirit up the public to insist on assembling the states-general. After the deputies for that meeting began to meet at Versailles, he published a regular journal, the avowed object of which was to give an account of the proceedings of the states-general. There were frequent insinuations against M. Necker in this paper, and some attempts to turn him into ridicule. It was universally read and pretty generally approved of by the popular party in other respects; yet it seemed to have small effect in injuring M. Necker in the public opinion. But having attacked some persons in the two privileged orders, it was suppressed by a decree of the council on the 7th of May. The electors of the tiers-etat of Paris immediately met, and published what they called a reclamation against the decree of the council; and Mirabeau continued his journal under the new title of 'Lettres du Comte de Mirabeau à ses Commettans.' From this an idea may be formed of the state of the king's authority even at this period. Mirabeau, who had not a high opinion of M. Necker's abilities, and who affected to despise them more than he did in reality, was exceedingly jealous of his popularity; but by continuing to vent his gall against him in his new publication, he injured his own more than that of the minister, or, what perhaps is more precisely the truth, his wit and talent of ridicule were relished, notwithstanding their being sometimes improperly directed. Independent of the great stock of popularity with which M. Necker had formerly retired from office, he had acquired an immense accession from being universally considered as the author of the double representation which was so unexpectedly granted to the tiers-etat. This rendered him an object of adoration to one party, and of execration to the other. It must be confessed, that the execrators have been the most per-

severing: the former having long since disappeared, the latter are to be found among the French emigrants all over Europe

Had M. Necker been as judicious in the use of his popularity as he was assiduous in acquiring it, many people imagine, that some of the most intemperate measures of the tiers-etat would have been prevented, and the monarchy saved without liberty being lost.

Processes had been carried on in the criminal courts of Britanny against the authors of insurrections and other excesses which had taken place in that province. When it was thought that the guilty were about to be condemned and punished as they deserved, M. Necker prevailed on the council to suspend the decisions of the courts, and thereby augmented the attachment of the populace to him. A little after the meeting of the states-general, several leading men belonging to the tiers-etat, who had a high opinion of the talents of M. Necker, and confidence in his integrity, gave him to understand, that they were disposed to be guided by him respecting their conduct in the assembly. To every proposition or insinuation of this nature his answer was, 'that it was the duty of the king's minister to convoke the states-general, and conduct the deputies to the door of the assembly, but there he must leave them—to the guidance of their own understanding and the instructions of their constituents.'

This conduct was approved of by some people, as what all ministers ought to imitate. Others gave him little credit for it, because they imagined it proceeded from his presuming, that the tiers-etat were disposed of themselves, without his securing any particular members, to adopt his views; or, if at any time a contrary disposition should appear, he thought he would have sufficient influence to subdue it. Whatever M. Necker's motives for not listening to them were; that such propositions were made to him by various deputies who had considerable influence, and that he declined them, I am assured of on good authority.

But, independent of the deputies above alluded to, M. Mirabeau himself, at this very period, notwithstanding all his jealousy of M. Necker, did not scruple to make advances to him, and to shew a disposition to co-operate with him in measures for allaying the fermentation which existed in the minds of the commons, and threatened the ruin of the monarchy. This we have on the authority of M. Malouet, a distinguished member of the constituent assembly, a man of integrity, and a friend to monarchy, but not that kind of monarchy which existed in France previous to the revolution—a lover of liberty, but not that kind of liberty which has taken place there since the 10th of August 1792.

Soon after the meeting of the states-general, during the disputes between the orders, M. Malouet drew up an address, well calculated to reconcile their differences, and which he proposed should be presented in the name of the commons to the king. It was on the point of being adopted, when it was prevented by a manœuvre of Mirabeau, who, although he had been at one time well disposed to support the principles of M. Malouet's address, whispered to the deputies nearest him, *Ceci est un message du chateau.** This immediately was spread through the hall, and prevented the address from passing. Mirabeau intended this not so much against M. Malouet as against M. Necker and the administration, to whom this address would have been of service. He had been provoked to this by the following incident.

M. Malouet, whose moral character was very different from that of Mirabeau, had avoided any acquaintance with him, until M. du Roverai of Geneva, at the request of the latter, brought them together at his lodgings in Versailles, towards the end of May 1789. At this meeting Mirabeau addressed Malouet in the following terms.—'J'ai desiré une explication avec vous, parce qu'au travers de votre modération je vous reconnois ami de la liberté, et je suis peut-être plus effrayé que vous de la fermentation que je

* This comes from the court.

vois dans les esprits, et des malheurs qui peuvent en resulter. Je ne suis point homme à me vendre lâchement au despotisme; je veux une constitution libre, mais monarchique. Je ne veux point ébranler la monarchie; et si on ne se met de bonne heure en mesure, j'apperçois dans notre assemblée de si mauvaises têtes, tant d'inexperience, d'exaltation, une resistance, une aigreur si inconsidérées, dans les deux premiers ordres, que je crains autant que vous d'horribles commotions. Vous êtes lié avec M. Necker et M. de Montmorin; vous devez savoir ce qu'ils veulent, et s'ils ont un plan; si ce plan est raisonnable, je le défendrai.' *

To this M. Malouet replied, that he had no certainty of the ministers having formed any plan. 'Hé bien,' rejoined Mirabeau, 'voulez-vous leur proposer de me voir et deconférer avec moi?' †

On mentioning this to M. Necker and M. de Montmorin, M. Malouet found both averse to any correspondence with Mirabeau. They talked of his moral character, &c. M. Malouet observed in answer to their objections, that a man of superlative talents, who, notwithstanding the immorality of his character, seemed to have reasonable political views, who was not decidedly fixed in any party, and who would add a great weight to whatever party he

* I wished to have some conversation with you, because, through all your moderation, I perceive that you are a friend to liberty. I am perhaps more afraid of the fermentation that I see in men's minds, and what may be the consequence, than you are. I am not capable of basely selling myself to the cause of despotism; I wish for a free constitution, but of a monarchical form. I have no desire to shake the monarchy. But I perceive so many wrong-headed persons in our assembly, such inexperience, such exaltation, so acrimonious and inconsiderate an obstinacy in the two first orders, that I dread some horrible commotion as much as you possibly can. You are connected with M. Necker and M. de Montmorin; you ought to know what their intentions are: if they have formed a plan, and if that plan is reasonable, I am willing to support it.

† Well, will you propose to them to see me, that we may have a conference?—See Collection des Opinions de M. Malouet, tome troisieme, Paris 1792.

should attach himself, was worthy of some attention, and deserved to be listened to.

It was at last agreed, that M. Necker should receive Mirabeau the following morning. The meeting took place accordingly; the minister's behaviour was cold in the highest degree. Mirabeau, observing this, reduced his to the same temperature: each imagined it was the duty of the other to break the ice; which neither condescending to do, their meeting was as ineffectual for the intended purpose, as that of two watermen brought to row in the same boat, who, on arriving at Whitehall Stairs, find the Thames frozen.

As Mirabeau retired, he said to M. Malouet,—'I shall not make them another visit, but they shall hear of me.' M. Malouet observes, that Mirabeau kept his word but too well; and the first opportunity he had of shewing his resentment was on the occasion above mentioned.

CHAPTER IX.

M. Necker forms a Plan of Government, which with little Alteration is approved of by the King and Council of State—Majority of the Clergy determine to join the Tiers-Etat—Proclamation for a Royal Session—The Tiers-Etat excluded from their Hall—Oath taken in the Tennis-Court—The King's Declaration and Speeches—Marquis de Brézé—Mirabeau's Answer to him—Decrees of the Assembly—The Timidity of the Council—The Causes of it.

It is apparent that, from the first assembling of the states-general at Versailles to the time the tiers-etat declared themselves a national assembly, M. Necker counted too much on his own importance, and imagined that it would be at any time in his power to prevent their going into dangerous excesses. It must be confessed, that he at this period enjoyed a degree of influence at court and popularity in the country that no minister had ever before unit-

ed. Without having the title of prime minister, he almost dictated all the decisions of the cabinet: for his advice was always adopted by the king; the other members of the administration had more the appearance of his clerks than of his colleagues, and found it absolutely necessary to be equally obsequious. His house was filled with deputies from morning to night, and several who were considered as leading ones were of the number.

M. Necker's importance, from the time that he began to act a public part in France, had always depended either on the favour of the monarch, or on that of the people, or on both. The nobles, the clergy, and the parliaments, were no way connected with it: none of these classes had ever shewn any partiality to M. Necker, and certainly he never shewed any partiality to them. It is most natural for men to impute an evil rather to something from which they themselves derive no benefit, than to that from which they derive the most flattering advantages. M. Necker might therefore be inclined to think, that the oppressions suffered by the French people, and the public misfortunes, proceeded infinitely more from the privileges enjoyed by the nobles, the clergy, and the parliaments, than from the power of the crown; and that the double representation granted to the tiers-etat would go more directly to controul the former than the latter. He must also have known indeed, that the nobles, the clergy, and the parliaments, formed the only checks to despotism that existed in the ancient government of France; but he might imagine that the new importance acquired by the tiers-etat would render those checks unnecessary, and that he himself possessed the power of dictating to the latter—*thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.* But when he perceived the independent and triumphant manner in which the third order proceeded on the 17th of June, he began to fear that not only the privileged orders, but the crown itself, and that degree of authority which is necessary to give effect and energy to government, were in danger; and he imagined it was full time

to pronounce his veto, and prevent the torrent of democracy from rolling any farther.

The nobles, who had as little faith in M. Necker's abilities as they had love for his person, and persuaded that the torrent could be no more stopped by his influence than the waves were by the voice of Canute, were ready to sink into despair.

It was moved in their assembly, that, after inviting the clergy to join them, they should constitute themselves into an upper house, in imitation of the British House of Peers. Whether it proceeded from prejudice against whatever is British, or that they were shocked at the idea of depreciating the pure metal of nobility with such a mass of ecclesiastical alloy, the proposal was heard with indignation, and rejected with scorn. In an address to the king they justified their own conduct, and strongly accused the tiers-etat for their late usurpations, particularly for declaring all th taxes illegal.

M. Necker in the meantime composed a kind of plan of government, or declaration of rights, which he expected would moderate the fermentation, and conciliate the minds of the commons, while it would also prove in some degree satisfactory to the other orders. In the system here traced out by M. Necker, many sources of complaint and oppression were removed; and on the whole it was well conceived, and might have formed the basis of an excellent constitution. Had he advised the king, and prevailed on him to have made the same proposal at the first meeting of the states-general, before the minds of the deputies were heated by debate, and provoked by opposition, it would in all probability have been joyfully accepted. Such a sedate and steady step towards liberty would have led to her attainment with much more certainty than all the furious strides and jumps, by which the French nation afterwards overshot her, and caught licentiousness in her stead.

M. Necker presented his plan to the king, advising his majesty to lay it before the states-general, at a royal ses-

sion to be directly summoned for that purpose. The king, who had hitherto implicitly approved of M. Necker's proposals, summoned an extraordinary council on the present occasion, to examine the piece which the minister had presented to him. The plan was in general approved of by this council. A very few alterations were made, and those, as I am assured, not very material; the most important being in the words, and not in the meaning or import of the articles.

There had long been different forms of expression used by the council for the annulling of acts or judgments of courts of justice, or of municipalities. The most rigorous form was in the use of the word, *cassation;* the most moderate form consisted in the following terms.—*Sans s'arrêter à tel jugement que le roi declaroit comme non avenu,*—that is to say, the king orders the contrary, as if the act or judgment had never passed. In the plan delivered to the council by M. Necker, he made use of the most moderate form in annulling the decrees of the tiers-etat of the 17th of June. The council, to mark with the greater force the king's disapprobation of those decrees, used the most rigorous terms, particularly in the third article, *Le roi casse et annulle, comme anticonstitutionelles, contraires aux lettres de convocation, et opposées à l'interêt de l'etat.* M. Necker certainly was in the right: provided the giant *be* destroyed, it is of no importance whether he dies by a stone from the sling of a stripling, or by the thunderbolt of Jupiter. Yet the king adhered to the alterations made by the councils, which was unfortunate; because by that means the form of declaration most likely to offend the assembly was adopted: and also because, however immaterial the difference between the two forms was, still that which was preferred could not be said to be the work of M. Necker, which alone would have secured it a more favourable reception.

On the 19th of June, the assembly of the clergy, who had been disputing for several days *where* they should ve-

rify their powers, decided by a small majority to join the national assembly—which struck such an alarm into the assembly of the nobles, that one of them proposed to address the king to dissolve the states-general. This measure was not adopted; but the court seem to have been as much alarmed as the nobles; for a party of the guards were ordered to take possession of the hall on the morning of the 20th of June, when the junction was to have been, and at the same time a proclamation was made in the following terms.—

'De par le Roi. Le roi ayant résolu de tenir une séance royale aux etats-généraux, Lundi 22 Juin, les préparatifs à faire dans les trois salles qui servent aux assemblées des ordres, exigent que les assemblées soient suspendues jusqu'après la tenue de ladite séance.'

When M. Bailly, the president of the assembly, came to the gate of the hall, he was refused admittance, and then demanded to speak to the officer of the guard. The officer told him, that he had orders to permit no person whomsoever to enter the hall of the *states-general.* 'I protest against such orders,' said M. Bailly, 'and I will give an account of this to the *national assembly.*'

The deputies were at this time in various groups standing before the gate. A rumour was spread, that the intention of the court was to dissolve the states-general. This occasioned a clamour among the multitude which surrounded the groups of deputies, every minute augmenting. 'Gentlemen,' said M. Bailly addressing the deputies, 'it is not a particular space surrounded by walls which constitutes a national assembly; we may assemble within or without, in the plains or in the mountains; wherever we meet, we equally are the national assembly.'

'Let us go forthwith to Marly,' said one of the deputies, 'and hold a session on the terrace: let the king himself take his place among us, and hear the language of liberty.'

But M. Bailly, having called the secretaries of the as-

tembly to accompany him, went again to the gate of the hall, and required that all the papers belonging to the assembly might be delivered to them. The officer immediately allowed them to enter, and to take the papers. The workmen had already removed all the benches, and were erecting a throne, and making other preparations for the royal session.

At this time it rained violently. Unwilling, however, to separate before they had come to some general resolution, the president invited the deputies to accompany him to an adjacent tennis-court, where they might hold a meeting.

The various groups of deputies then uniting into one body followed the president; and in the enthusiastic state of their minds it will readily be imagined, that the applause of the surrounding multitude was a full compensation for the inconveniences they suffered from the rain: it is more than probable indeed, that the shower which was then at the height, by rendering the scene more affecting, and giving it the appearance of persecution, increased the enjoyment of many of the actors; and although the rain was the only incident in those scenes which could not possibly be charged against the court, yet it contributed more than all the rest to augment the indignation of the multitude, rendering the court more odious and the deputies more precious in their eyes, by fixing on them in some degree the character of martyrs in addition to that of patriots.

When they were convened in the tennis-court, M. Bailly read a letter to the deputies, which he had received that morning, informing him, that the king had ordered the heralds to proclaim a royal session to be held on the 22d; and that the hall must of course be prepared for that purpose. He also communicated to them the answer which he had sent to the marquis de Brézé, the master of the ceremonies, and which was in these words. —' N'ayant pas encore reçu d'ordres du roi, monsieur, et

l'assemblée étant annoncée pour huit heures, je me rendrai où mon devoir m'appelle.' *

The president, no doubt, intended that it should be understood from this answer, that he would take nothing as an order from the king, which did not come directly from his majesty to him without the intervention of a third person.

M. Bailly had scarcely finished reading the answer he had sent to the marquis de Brézé, when he received another letter from the same gentleman, declaring that it was by the *positive orders of the king* he had sent him word, that as a royal session was to be held on the 22d, which required preparations in the three halls of the three different orders, it was his majesty's pleasure that there should be no meeting of the deputies until then; and that he had given orders, that no person should be admitted into the hall.

This excited fresh indignation and some threats against the marquis de Brézé. It was the universal opinion of the deputies, that there was an intention to dissolve the assembly of the states-general.

M. Bailly, having exhorted them to calmness, desired their opinions with respect to the proper measures to be adopted in the present emergency. M. Target, M. Barnave, and others, made discourses, the tendency of which was to increase a heat, which of itself was every moment augmenting. At length M. Mounier, a man of moderation, whose views were directed to a reform of government consistent with the preservation of the monarchy, proposed an oath to be taken on the spot by the deputies, never to part until the important objects for which they had been chosen by their constituents were attained, and the constitution was completed. This motion having been universally approved, M. Bailly in the most solemn

* Having received no particular order from the king, sir, and the assembly having been appointed to meet at eight o'clock, I shall go where my duty calls me.

manner pronounced the words of the oath, to which all the deputies, joining hands, announced their adherence by an affirmative acclamation, which was followed by the shouts of the spectators, who, in the fervour of enthusiasm, poured many blessings on the deputies as the saviours of their country. M. Necker was at this time absent from Versailles, attending a dying relation, and entirely escaped the odium in which the court and other ministers were involved.

The following day the court returned from Marly to Versailles, and a rumour spread that the king had abandoned the measure of holding a royal session. The joy which this news occasioned at Paris, is a sufficient evidence that something pernicious was expected from that measure. It was not abandoned, however, but only postponed for one day, and instead of the 22d the 23d was announced by proclamation as the day on which it was to be held; and, that M. Bailly might have no reason to complain of not being made acquainted with the king's pleasure by a direct message from his majesty, a letter was sent to him in these words.—

'Je vous préviens, monsieur, que la séance que j'ai indiquée pour demain, Lundi, n'aura lieu que Mardi à dix heures du matin, et que la sa salle ne sera ouverte que pour ce moment. (Signé) Louis.'*

The marquis of Brézé, who transmitted this note from the king to M. Bailly, requested at the same time, that the latter would acknowledge the receipt of it—which the president did in the following laconic terms.—

'J'ai reçu, monsieur, la lettre du roi, qui m'est addressée, et que sa majesté vous a chargé de me faire tenir. J'ai l'honneur d'être, &c.'†

In advising the king to address his letter directly to

* I premonish you, sir, that the session which I intended for to-morrow, Monday, will not take place till Tuesday at ten o'clock, and that the hall will not be open till then. (Signed) Louis.

† I have received, sir, the king's letter which was addressed to me, and which his majesty ordered you to transmit to me. I have the honour to be, &c.

M. Bailly, in consequence of the hint given in his former note to the marquis de Brézé, there appears a degree of condescension which does not at all accord with the lofty measures of the court on the 20th, and seems to indicate a disposition to relinquish them. It was evident, however, from the king's note, that his majesty expected that no attempt should be made to assemble the deputies in the common hall, or elsewhere, before they met at the royal session. This did not prevent M. Bailly and the deputies from going to the tennis-court, with a view to hold their assembly and unite with the clergy: but they found it so much crowded with the people who were desirous of being witness to that ceremony, that they retired in search of a more commodious place, and first applied to the monks of the convent of Recollets for the use of their church. Those fathers represented, that they depended on the bounty of the king for their maintenance, and begged that their church might not be made use of for a purpose which their benefactor disapproved. From the Recollets M. Bailly and the deputies repaired again to the gate of their own hall, and were again refused admission by the guards. As they must have foreseen that this would be the case, the second attempt could only be intended to augment the rage of the people against those who treated their representatives with such indignity, and forced them to wander from place to place for shelter, and in search of a hall to assemble in. What renders this conjecture the more probable is, that the instant the officer of the guards refused them admittance, the president and all the deputies betook themselves to the church of St. Louis; into which having entered without difficulty, the oath taken at the tennis-court was administered to those deputies who had not been present on that occasion. While they were employed in this manner, and in settling some other ceremonials, the majority of the clergy were assembling in the choir. When all were adjusted, the clergy, with several bishops at their head, joined them. The doors of the choir were thrown open.

The deputies of the tiers-etat received their new associates with open arms, and the vault of the church resounded with the acclamations of the spectators. The clergy took their seats on the right hand of the president. The marquis of Blacon and the comte Antoine d'Agoult, deputies from the province of Dauphiny, attended on this occasion, and had their powers verified. They said that they were prompted to this step, without waiting for the rest of the order to which they belonged, by their consciences and by love for their country. They were the only deputies of the order of noblesse who joined the tiers-etat previous to the royal session.

On the 22d of June, all the streets of Versailles leading to the hall of the assembly were filled with detachments from the French and the Swiss guards, while parties of the marechaussée patrolled around the hall, and through the streets, with orders to disperse crowds or groups, wherever they were observed to be forming.

By the proclamation the deputies were directed to attend at ten in the morning; but, according to the ceremonial which was observed, the clergy were admitted first, and placed at the right hand of the throne prepared for the king. The nobles were introduced next, and seated on the left. This took up a considerable space of time, during which the deputies of the third order were obliged to seek shelter from the rain in an old wooden house near the hall, and on the great avenue.

As the two privileged orders were not placed so soon as was expected, it was imagined that the time was prolonged unnecessarily. M. Bailly had some sharp altercation with the marquis de Brézé on that account; but the tiers-etat were at last admitted, and placed themselves below the two other orders on each side, and at the end of the hall opposite to the throne.

The king having left the palace as soon as the deputies were placed, arrived with a pompous retinue, and seated himself on the throne a little after eleven. He was surrounded by the princes of the blood, the dukes and

peers, and certain officers of the household; four heralds, with their king at arms, stood in the middle of the hall; and the ministers were seated around a table immediately before the throne. But one chair was vacant: M. Necker was still in attendance on his sick relation. Some think that he sacrificed public duty a little too much to private feeling on this occasion; others accuse him of having absented himself from pique, because the memorial and plan which he had drawn up was not *literally* adopted by the council and approved by the king. But, whatever was the cause, his absence had an ill effect; it gave the public an impression that he did not approve of the measures of the court, and it rendered the deputies suspicious even of those parts of the king's declaration which were the most agreeable to their own principles. This jealousy and distrust threw a gloom over the meeting, which was augmented by the accident of one of the king's secretaries dying of an apoplexy in the middle of the hall.

The king having pronounced an introductory discourse, the declaration or plan of a new constitution and system of government was read. By this the proceedings of the national assembly were annulled; the liberty of the press was recommended, but with such restrictions as might have had a tendency to render it of little utility. A desire to secure personal freedom was expressed; but the assembly were invited to reconcile the abolition of lettres de cachet, so universally wished for, with the safety of the government, the power of repressing the first symptoms of sedition, and *securing the honour of private families.**

* The last article may seem extraordinary to British subjects, who will naturally think, that the honour of private families would have a greater chance of being injured than protected by lettres de cachet. But, during the ancient government, when any person of a noble family was condemned by law to be publicly executed, all their relations, whether they had any regard for the condemned person, or any belief of his innocence or not, used their interest to prevent his execution—because, from an old prejudice stronger in France than in any other country, a public execution was considered as dishonouring the whole family. When the

On the other hand, the king was by this plan bound from establishing any new tax without the consent of the representatives of the nation. No privilege or distinction of orders was to prevent the equal payment of taxes. The corvée, so oppressive on the peasantry, was to be entirely abolished. The distinction of orders was to be preserved; but the deputies were to assemble and debate in common, and the public representation was to be sacred from the encroachments of the crown. Many other salutary plans of reform were recommended; the whole manifesting such a disposition to meet the wishes of the people as merited a return of gratitude, and formed a foundation upon which a happy and permanent structure of free government might have been built.

Of all the articles in the king's declaration, perhaps the most unpopular and offensive was that prohibiting any person except the deputies themselves from being present at their deliberations, whether they were held in common or in the chambers of their respective orders; yet none could be more necessary for the maintenance of order, decency, the freedom of debate, and for the public weal.

That all the concessions which the king seemed willing to make to the wishes of the nation were not received by the deputies of the tiers-etat with satisfaction, seems to have been owing, 1st, To their having been delayed until the majority of the clergy had united with them, which it was firmly believed would be soon followed by

the case, therefore, was thought too atrocious to give hopes of obtaining a full pardon, the relations made interest for a lettre de cachet, to shut up the criminal for life. This is probably what is alluded to in the king's declaration, by the expression of securing the honour of private families. Yet no maxim was more admired or oftener quoted by the French, than the fine expression of one of their own poets,

Le crime fait la honte, et non pas l'echaffaud.

This prejudice was removed by the constitution, which was accepted by the king on the 14th of September 1791; and most fortunate it is for private families that this precaution was thought of, otherwise there are very few private families in France who would not at present be considered as dishonoured.

that of a great part of the nobles. 2d, To some of them having been delivered in terms too dictatorial, it was said that those who wished well to the cause of freedom would not adopt the language of despotism; the maxim *suaviter in modo et fortiter in re*, was never more necessary and never less observed than on this occasion. 3d, To M. Necker's having rejected the advances made to him by Mirabeau; for had the latter been on a good understanding and co-operated with the former, there can be little doubt but their conjoint influence would have prevailed on the tiers to have been satisfied with the plan as it was, or with a few alterations. 4th, The absence of M. Necker from the ceremony of the royal session, which convinced the people and the deputies that he did not approve of the plan of government, and rendered them distrustful of the intentions of the court. 5th, The ill-humour into which the deputies of the third order were thrown, by the sudden shutting up of their hall, and by the marks of neglect or contempt which were shewn to them on various occasions between that period and the royal sessions. 6th, The numerous military detachments that patrolled through the streets of Versailles, and around the hall of the assembly, on the day of that session. At a time when so many incidents concurred to fill the minds of the people with prejudice against the noblesse, diffidence of the court, and an enthusiastic veneration for the deputies of the third order; when the deputies themselves had caught fresh enthusiasm from that of the people, and fresh courage from a view of the support they had; nothing could be worse judged than the ostentatious procession of the court from the palace to the hall, the embroidered heralds and numerous guards, as likewise the unusual display of pompous carriages and gaudy liveries of the noblesse; while the deputies of the tiers-etat, who in fact had the power of the state in their hands, were huddled together under the shade of an old house, until those who were thought worthy of attention being commodiously seated, they at last were allowed to enter and stand like a mob at the bot-

tom of the hall. Pompous ceremonies and processions, when the minds of the spectators are averse to the occasion of them and alienated from the performers, instead of veneration excite disgust or contempt. It is performing high mass with Romish splendour before a congregation of presbyterians.

After the declaration was read, no mark of approbation or discontent, except that of profound silence, was given. The king then rose, and addressing the assembly once more said,—'Vous venes, messieurs, d'entendre le résultat de mes dispositions, et de mes vues; elles sont conformes au vif desir que j'ai d'opérer le bien public; et si par une fatalité loin de ma pensée vous m'abandonniez dans une si belle entreprise, seul, je ferai le bien de mes peuples, &c. &c.

'Refléchissez, messieurs, qu'aucun de vos projets ne peut avoir force de loi sans mon approbation speciale. Ainsi je suis le garant naturel de vos droits respectifs, et tous les ordres de l'etat peuvent se reposer sur mon equitable impartialité. Tout défiance de votre part seroit une grande injustice. C'est moi jusqu'à present qui fais tout pour le bonheur de mes peuples; et il est rare, peut-être, que l'unique ambition d'un souverain soit d'obtenir de ses sujets qu'ils s'entendent enfin pour accepter ses bienfaits.'*

He concluded by ordering them to separate directly, and to assemble the following day, each in the chamber appropriated to the order to which he belonged.

* You have heard, gentlemen, the result of my intentions or views; they are conformable to the lively desire I have for the public good; and if you, by some fatality far from my thoughts, should abandon me in so praiseworthy an enterprise—I alone will accomplish the happiness of my subjects, &c.

Recollect, gentlemen, that none of your projects can have the force of law without my particular approbation. Thus I am the natural guarantee of your respective rights, and all the orders of the state may rely upon my justice and impartiality—all diffidence on your part would be doing me great injustice: it is I who have hitherto done all for the good of my people; and it is perhaps a little singular, that the sole ambition of a sovereign should be to prevail on his subjects to agree with each other, that they may receive his favours to the greater advantage.

If it were not known, that no part of the speeches pronounced by the king on this occasion, nor of the declaration read in his name, were of his composition, the self-sufficiency and loftiness of this speech are so contrary to the natural diffidence of his character, that it would be quite apparent that this at least could not be his. It is certainly not unusual for ministers to regale the sovereigns, in whose service they are, with occasional treats of panegyric; but they generally contrive to have them pronounced by some other orator than the sovereign himself; and the ministers of Lewis XVI were blameable for having deviated from the established custom in the present instance; but they were still more blameable for placing their master in the awkward situation of giving commands, without having secured the means of enforcing obedience.

As soon as the king had pronounced this peremptory order, he retired, and was followed by the nobility and the majority of the clergy. The deputies of the commons remained. They seemed indignant, but not intimidated. As a hint to them to withdraw, workmen were sent into the hall to remove the throne and the benches near it. More respectful than those who sent them, the workmen suspended their labour, on perceiving that the deputies did not retire. When their perseverance was known at the court, M. de Brézé, an officer, was sent to remind them of the king's orders. To this admonition M. Bailly, the president, replied, that the national assembly received orders from no person. An interval of silence followed, during which it was doubtful whether all the deputies approved the president's answer or not. Mirabeau seizing the critical moment exclaimed, 'Nous avons entendu les intentions qu'on a suggerées au roi;' and then, addressing the officer of the court, continued, 'et vous qui ne sauriez être son organe auprès des etats generaux, vous qui n'avez ici ni place, ni voix, ni droit de parler, vous n'êtes pas fait pour nous rappeller son discours; allez dire à ceux qui vous envoient que nous sommes ici par la volonté du peu-

ple, et qu'on ne nous en arrachera que par la puissance des bayonettes.'*

The immediate effect of this speech of Mirabeau was, that the deputies, by a general acclamation, announced their assent to what he had pronounced. The president then addressing himself to M. de Brézé said, 'The assembly decreed yesterday, that they would continue their meeting after the royal session; I can make no alteration in this decree.'—'Shall I carry that answer to the king?' said M. de Brézé.—'Yes, sir,' rejoined the president.

When de Brézé was withdrawn, Mirabeau proposed, that the persons of the deputies should be declared inviolable, and that whoever should make any attempt against their liberty should be deemed traitors to the country, and guilty of a capital crime; which passed into a decree immediately. The abbé Sieyes made an harangue, the tendency of which was to encourage them to adhere to their purpose of re-establishing the nation in its rights, and forming a free constitution, which no power on earth, he said, had a right to do for them; and he used an expression, which was admired at the time, and has been often quoted since.—'Do you not feel, gentlemen, that you are to-day what you were yesterday?' He finished his speech by moving, that their assemblies should be public. No authority, he added, should prevail on them to exclude the people from hearing their debates. This also was agreed to, and the assembly soon after broke up.

When M. le marquis de Brézé made his report to the council of the manner in which the king's orders had been obeyed, they seemed in a greater dilemma and much more

* Yes, we have heard what the king has been prevailed on to express. But you, who cannot be his organ in this assembly; you, who have here neither seat nor vote, nor any right whatever, are not the proper person to remind us of his discourse. Go and tell those who sent you, that we are here assembled by the will of the French people, and nothing will make us retire but the bayonet.

alarmed than the assembly had been when they heard them delivered.*

As there were four thousand guards under arms on the day of the royal session, and seven or eight regiments in the neighbourhood of Versailles, the passive timidity of the council may seem extraordinary. The following circumstances are said to have made a strong impression, and to have contributed to an alteration in their measures. At the ceremony in the tennis-court on the 20th, several of the guards had appeared greatly affected; and it was believed, that none but the foreign troops would have obeyed, if any violence had been ordered to be used to the deputies. When the king returned from the assembly to the palace on the 23d, although the streets were crowded with people, they maintained a sullen silence. No sign of applause, not so much as a single *Vive le Roi!* was heard—an event without a precedent in the annals of the French monarchy; for the French populace hitherto had been as much accustomed to applaud their king, whatever his character was, as often as he appeared in public, as the ancient Egyptians were to worship whatever the priests presented to them, whether in the form of a crocodile or a calf.

* Those who suggested these peremptory orders given by the king on the present occasion, seem to have acted on the same principle with Bays in the duke of Buckingham's Rehearsal—who, to make sure of the success of his piece, said, that he would appear on the stage in mourning, attended by an executioner, and roundly tell the audience, that if they did not immediately applaud his play, he would order the executioner to cut off his head before their faces; on which, adds he, they will all applaud. But on its being suggested, that possibly the audience might not applaud, Bays had thought of no subterfage, by which he might avoid the other alternative.

CHAPTER X.

Great Popularity of M. Necker—Disorders in Paris—Part of the Order of Nobles join the National Assembly—Reflections on that event—Populace demand to be admitted, contrary to the King's Orders—Deputation to the King on that subject—The King desires the Nobles and Clergy to unite with the Tiers-Etat—Debates on that Subject—The two superior Orders join the National Assembly—Universal Joy—Discourse of Mirabeau—Reflections.

GREAT numbers of the deputies, after the breaking up of the assembly, went directly to M. Necker's hotel; but he, on the pretext of being indisposed, saw very few of them. It was soon after rumoured, that the king was displeased with the minister, because he had not attended the royal session, and that he was to be dismissed from the administration. In the evening, however, he went to wait on his majesty. This was no sooner known, and it was known immediately, than the courts of the palace were crowded with the populace, who from time to time exclaimed, *Vive M. Necker! Point de demission!* but no cry of *Vive le Roi!* was heard.

After his conference with the king, as M. Necker returned to his own house, the multitude surrounding him insisted on his giving his promise not to resign his situation. This they obtained without much difficulty. The assurance was heard with transport; those nearest him held him up in their arms to gratify their fellow-citizens with a sight of this favourite minister, and then actually carried him in this triumphant manner to his hotel.

The nobles, and the minority of the clergy who had not united with the tiers-etat, met the day after the royal session in their respective chambers, as the king had enjoined; but the other deputies, still retaining the name of the national assembly, met in the old hall, and deliberated as a complete legislative body. Nothing can be a stronger proof how much all the king's injunctions were

disregarded, than that on this first meeting, although he had ordered that none but deputies should be admitted to hear their debates, a great number of strangers were present. The sentries at the door asked of each person that presented himself, if he was a deputy; but if by his hesitation there was reason to suspect that he was not, the sentry whispered to him, *Say yes*, and immediately desired him to enter.

While the disputes concerning the union of the orders existed at Versailles, the minds of the Parisians were in continual agitation. Messengers were dispatched several times a-day from Versailles, to inform the groups and bands of politicians in the Palais Royal, of what passed at the assembly; and, if any one ventured to utter an expression contrary to the prevailing opinion, he was exposed to the capricious insults of the multitude.

They obliged one person to make what they called *amende honorable*, by asking pardon on his knees and kissing the ground; others they punished with the rod; and one unfortunate ecclesiastic they treated so rudely, by shoving him from one side to the other of the circle which surrounded him, that he was long confined to his bed, and with difficulty escaped with his life from the consequences of this barbarous sport.

One wretch, who had a diabolical rancour against M. d'Espremenil, seized the moment when a bulletin just brought from Versailles was read to a group in one of the public places, accusing him as an apostate from the cause of the people, and made a most violent harangue against that gentleman, which he concluded by a proposal, that, as his person was not immediately in their power, they should turn his wife and children into the street, and burn his house. A person of presence of mind and humanity, who heard this shocking proposal, and was afraid that some of the most furious might adopt it, exclaimed, 'that it would be no punishment to the real criminal, because the house and furniture belonged to the landlord, his wife to the public; and that as for the children, they

perhaps belonged to some of the best patriots in the company.

This sarcasm against M. d'Espremenil was believed neither by the speaker nor the audience; but as it put them in a humour inconsistent with the horrid proposal, which certainly was the intention of the speaker, it may be considered as a very happy jest.

Besides the moveable groups which were constantly forming and dissolving in the Palais Royal, a band of young men formed themselves into a society, erected a scaffold sheltered from rain, in a form of a kind of hall, and, in imitation of the assembly at Versailles, chose a president and secretaries, and debated on political questions. Here the most incendiary motions were made, and the most extravagant and ridiculous accusations against the ministers and persons of distinction of both sexes belonging to the court. Those accusations for being ridiculous were not the less dangerous; as they exposed the objects of them to the insults and fury of the mob. At the conclusion of each debate, there was a decree or sentence, expressive of the opinion of the society, immediately drawn up and announced to the multitude. After a long debate respecting M. d'Espremenil, who, from being esteemed as a patriot, was now detested as a courtier, the sentence of this society was, that his name should be erased from the list of counsellors of the parliament, and he himself declared a traitor to his country.

L'Abbé Maury by the same authority was to be placed on a pillory on the Pont-neuf, there to remain during the sitting of the states-general.

A third sentence was, that all persons of the name of Polignac should be transported to the poorest part of the province of Auvergne, that it might be fertilized by their riches. This was directed against Madame de Polignac, the queen's favourite, who was supposed to have enriched herself and many of her relations at the expense of the national treasure.

What was burlesque or humourous in these mock de-

crees made them a source of mirth, till their consequences became not only serious but horrible. Perhaps it is characteristic of the French more than of any other nation, to blend sentiments of gaiety with those of atrocity, although every idea belonging to the latter ought to exclude all tendency to the former. Instances of this unnatural mixture are not unfrequent in the writings of Voltaire; and many shocking proofs of it occur in the course of the French revolution.

To quiet the minds of the Parisians, and prevent disorder, M. Necker wrote a letter to M. de Crosne, lieutenant of police, giving assurance that the king had no intention of dissolving the states-general. Indeed, it was now apparent, both at Versailles and at Paris, that they would be dissolved in no other way than by being all united with the tiers-etat, under the common name of the national assembly. This was known to be the wish of the duke of Orleans, and generally imagined, in him, to proceed from childish and ungenerous motives; but there were members of the body of nobles, who, notwithstanding the privileges which they themselves enjoyed, beheld with painful sensibility the sufferings of the large mass of their countrymen, under the manifold abuses of the ancient government. Their object was the reformation of abuses and acquisition of freedom, by the establishment of a government, in which the monarch as well as the people would be gainers; because the power of doing wrong, and of becoming corrupt and unhappy, would be limited on his part, and the necessity of crouching under oppression and insult would be removed on theirs; because he would acquire subjects whose love would do him honour, instead of slaves, whose applause was a proof of nothing but their own debasement. But that portion of the nobles who thought in this manner, also thought, that their object was not to be attained without abandoning on the present emergency the class to which they belonged, which they saw attached to the old system, and joining the tiers-etat.

A gentleman of this country, who with a most comprehensive natural understanding, possesses a great store of useful and ornamental literature—not like those who possess that kind of property, as if it were all in land or on mortgage, which cannot always be turned to immediate use, but like one who has the value of a large estate all in sterling gold at his command, on every private or public occasion—this gentleman observes, that 'turbulent, discontented men of quality, in proportion as they are puffed up with personal pride and arrogance, generally despise their own order: one of the first symptoms they discover of a selfish and mischievous ambition, is a profligate disregard of a dignity which they partake with others. To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections; it is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind. The interests of that portion of social arrangement are a trust in the hands of all those who compose it; and as none but bad men would justify it in abuse, none but traitors would barter it away for their own personal advantage.'

These observations are in some respects as just as they are ingenious. Unquestionably an attachment to the little platoon to which a man accidentally belongs, is a step towards general benevolence beyond mere selfishness; but it is a step which many people take without advancing farther. In defending the privileges and claims of the particular class to which a man belongs, he may only think of his own interest; and there are instances of men who have distinguished themselves by that kind of zeal, without any good-will to one individual of the profession or class to which they belonged.

It is an indisputable truth, that none but traitors would barter away, for their own particular interest, any of the general privileges of that class of society to which they belong; but it is equally true, that the man who is willing to join in a general sacrifice of privileges or claims

which have been long attached to the class or profession to which he belongs, but which he thinks unjust in themselves, and contrary to the good of society in general, acts a nobler part than the man who at all events supports and defends them. And, upon the whole, I am apt to think that more evil has accrued to mankind from their unjust partiality to the division or particular class to which they belong, than from their sacrificing its interest from any reason whatever.

Has not the fellow-feeling, which exists through all the branches of law and physic, been long felt and complained of as the source of many abuses by which the public suffers? Has not the *esprit de corps* which reigns among the clergy afforded protection to much imposture, and produced much partiality to some and much persecution of others, particularly in Roman Catholic countries, where the power of the clergy is greater, and where there are fewer and less affectionate bonds of relation between them and the laity?

On the 24th of June it was proposed in the assembly of the nobles, that they should unite with the commons; and the propriety of this measure was ably maintained by some members, equally distinguished for their talents and integrity; and on the 25th forty-seven nobles, at the head of whom was the duke of Orleans, actually went and incorporated themselves with the national assembly. Having mentioned the leader, it is necessary, in justice to this band of nobility, to add, that the duke of Rochefoucault, the counts Lally Tolendal, Clermont-Tonnerre, and other men of unblemished character, were also of the number.

They were attended through the streets with the applauding acclamations of the people, and received with joy by the national assembly; but the crowd which had accompanied them to the hall of the assembly insisted on entering and being witnesses to the happy union of the orders. When the request of the multitude was announced, it produced a demur, because of the king's express

order that the people should not be present at their debates; for although the sentries allowed those to enter, who, from the decency of their appearance, might pass for deputies, they still kept out the mere mob. A debate therefore ensued on this question, whether they should attend to the king's command, or to the requisition of the mob. The reader will perhaps be surprised, that any debate should arise on such a subject; but he cannot be more surprised than M. Barnave seems to have been. He began his speech in these words.—'Il est étrange et surprenant que l'on veuille defendre à la nation l'entrée de la salle nationale!' * Although he continued to speak with great energy, there was reason to fear, from the noise at the door, that the people would not trust their cause to the strength of his arguments, but were on the point of using more forcible means; on which M. Bailly, the archbishop of Vienne, and the count Clermont-Tonnerre, went to assure them that the assembly would send a deputation of their members to the king, to request a free entrance for them into the hall, and that in all probability the doors would be thrown open on the following day. This satisfied the people; and the deputation was immediately appointed, and consisted of six ecclesiastics, six nobles, and twelve of the third order. This was putting the king to the disagreeable alternative of either increasing the discontent of the people, or recalling the order he had given. It was not difficult to foresee the consequence.

The majority of the nobles, however, and the minority of the clergy who had not united with the tiers-etat, continued to meet in their respective halls. The only question they had to discuss was, Whether they should join their brethren, or continue to form chambers apart? In the chamber of the nobles it was decided, that they should at all events remain separate; in that of the clergy the same measure was carried, but in a less determined man-

* It is strange and surprising, that the nation should be refused admittance into the national assembly!

ner—some principal members seceded on the 26th. In the meantime the king was in the most cruel perplexity; frequent councils were held, and nothing was decided. In a private conversation which he had with the duke of Luxembourg, it is said, that the king first expressed a desire for the union of the orders. The duke represented, that this step would be more injurious to the crown than to the nobles; that by uniting in one assembly with the third order, the noblesse, from their rank, the respect due to their families, and their wealth, would retain a considerable share of importance in the state; but that the crown had every thing to dread from the union, and therefore that his faithful nobles were determined to resist to the last, and die in defence of the monarchy. The king, who had a dislike to violent measures, and sickened at the idea of bloodshed, answered, 'Je ne veux pas qu'il perisse un seul homme pour ma querelle.'

It would be a curious, though painful, subject of calculation, to endeavour to ascertain how many of the human race, who have been cut off since that period, would be now alive, had all the sovereign princes in Europe been of the same way of thinking in this point with the unfortunate Lewis XVI. All the conquests which the most successful of them have made, and all the laurels which their generals have obtained, will hardly be thought a compensation for so many hundred thousand lives as by the lowest computation have been lost by the war, in the interval between June 1789 and this present December 1794.

On the 27th the king sent a letter to the duke of Luxembourg, who was president of the order of nobles, then assembled in their own particular hall. The letter was of the same import with what his majesty had expressed the preceding night, and requested that the nobles should, without any farther delay, unite with the two other orders in their common hall, that they might accomplish the *paternal objects* he had in view.

The king's letter having been read, the question was

stated, Whether they should unite, in conformity to the king's desire, or not? The majority seemed to be for the affirmative; but a considerable number were of the opposite opinion. It was asserted, that it was their duty to endeavour to save the king in spite of himself. Some proposed, that they should bind themselves by a solemn oath never to yield up their privilege as nobles, by uniting with the tiers-etat in a common assembly.

The viscount de Mirabeau, whose political opinions were the reverse of his brothers, had not patience to wait for the decision of the assembly on this motion, but instantly swore that, for his own part, he would not leave the chamber until they had come to a resolution never to disgrace themselves by an union with the third order. Notwithstanding this particular oath on the part of the viscount, the motion for the general one was rejected; on which it was evident, that the junction would be carried; and therefore several protests, very strongly expressed, were taken by those who opposed it. In the midst of this contest, a letter was delivered to the president. It was from the count d'Artois, assuring the duke that a longer resistance would put the king's life in danger.*

When this was communicated to the assembly, M. de Cazales, a courageous friend of monarchy, who imagined he saw its ruin in the union of the orders, said, 'If either the king or the monarchy must perish, our first duty is to save the monarchy; and, if the king is in danger, let us go and form a rampart with our bodies for his defence.'

The duke of Luxembourg, however, observed, that there was not time to deliberate longer; it was now their duty to unite, and afterwards endeavour to save both. It was then agreed, that they should go directly and unite themselves with the national assembly; and, that the viscount de Mirabeau might not be under the necessity of

* The count d'Artois had long been unpopular; and, in some people's opinion, if an insurrection had happened, the count's life would have been in more danger than the king's.

remaining in the chamber all the remainder of his life, the president told him that he released him from his oath —which of course quieted the alarmed conscience of the viscount.

The cardinal de Rochefoucault received a letter from the king at the same time and to the same purpose with that sent to the duke of Luxembourg. When the cardinal had communicated its contents to the minority of the clergy who remained in the hall of their order, they agreed without a debate to obey the will of the king.

At about four in the afternoon it was understood in the national assembly, that the two privileged orders were coming to join them. If the noblesse and clergy had displayed an imprudent and invidious magnificence at the first assembling of the states-general, they avoided that error in the ceremony of uniting with the third order. However applauded the union was by the nation at large, it was performed by the nobles without ostentation, and by the clergy with Christian humility. They chose a time when very few members were in the hall; the president himself was absent: he was immediately sent for, and arrived in time to receive the clergy and nobles. They entered at the same time at two different doors, the clergy at the right, and the nobles at the left, and walked to their places in two parallel lines. The cardinal de Rochefoucault as president of the clergy, addressing M. Bailly, said, 'We are conducted hither by our love and respect for the king, by our regard for our country, and our zeal for the public weal.'

The duke of Luxembourg, on the part of the nobility, said,—'Gentlemen, the order of nobles have this day decreed to meet at this national hall, that they may give to the king a proof of their respect, and to the nation a proof of their patriotism.'

M. Bailly, the president of the assembly, declared that he could not find words to express the joy he felt on this happy union of all the branches of the national family; that by the junction of the clergy and nobility with the

third order, the prosperity of their common country was secured, and that day would be for ever celebrated as a festival in France.

As soon as it was known that the union of the orders had taken place at the desire of the king, the inhabitants of Versailles, transported with joy, ran in crowds to the palace. The guards, alarmed at their number and the violence of their emotion, were preparing to resist their entrance, when hearing the cry of *Vive le Roi!* the gates were thrown open, and the extensive courts of the castle were immediately filled with a multitude of people of both sexes and all conditions, who begged to be gratified with a sight of the king. The monarch soon appeared at the balcony with the queen at his side: both were received with applause, and nothing was heard but expressions of gratitude and admiration.

As M. Necker had been absent from the royal session, and had been often with the king and a close attendant on the council at the time when the resolution was taken, on the part of the king to propose the union of the orders, the merit of this was imputed to him. As often as he appeared in the streets of Versailles, he was surrounded by applauding crowds, who exacted of him to renew the assurance that he had no intention to resign; which when he gave them, the cry of *Vive le Roi!* was joined to that of *Vive M. Necker!* which they had been exclaiming from the beginning.

Couriers were continually passing and repassing between Paris and Versailles, while the union was in agitation; and, notwithstanding that it was pretty generally expected, yet the news of its having actually taken place produced as great demonstrations of joy among the Parisians, as if they had been afraid it could not happen. The most flattering ideas of national peace and prosperity were entertained by all ranks of people. Mirabeau seems to have entertained the same hopes of this coalition. The following are his words.—'Qu'il sera glorieux pour la France et pour nous, que cette grande revolution ne coûte à l'hu-

manité ni des forfaits ni des crimes! Les plus petits etats n'ont souvent acheté une ombre de liberté, qu'au prix du sang le plus précieux. Une nation, trop fiére de sa constitution et des vices de la nôtre, a souffert plus d'un siecle des convulsions et des guerres civiles, avant que d'affermir ses loix. L'Amerique même, dont le genie tutelaire des mondes semble récompenser aujourd'hui l'affranchissement qui est notre ouvrage, n'a joui de ce bien inestimable qu'apreès des revers sanglans et des combats longs et douteux. Et nous, messieurs, nous verrons la même révolution s'opérer par le seul concours des lumières et des intentions patriotiques! Nos combats sont de simples discussions, nos ennemis sont des préjugés pardonnables, nos victoires ne seront point cruelles, nos triomphes seront bénis par ceux qui seront subjugués les derniers.

'L'histoire n'a trop souvent raconté les actions que de bêtes feroces, parmi lesquelles on distingue de loin en loin des héros. Il nous est permis d'espérer que nous commençons l'histoire des hommes, celle de frères, qui nés pour se rendre mutuellement heureux, sont d'accord presque dans leurs dissentimens, puisque leur objet est le même, et que leurs moyens seuls différent.'*

* How honourable will it be for France and for us, that this great revolution should be accomplished without offences and without crimes! Some of the most inconsiderable states have not been able to obtain the shadow of liberty, but at the expense of the most precious blood. One nation, too proud of her own constitution and of the faults of ours, underwent a whole age of civil wars and convulsions before she had her laws confirmed. America herself, the confirmation of whose liberty was our work, which the guardian genius of the world seems this day to recompense, did not enjoy that inestimable blessing until after many severe struggles and many desperate and bloody battles. And we, gentlemen, have the happiness to see a revolution of the same nature brought about by the union of enlightened minds with patriotic intentions. Our battles are mere discussions; our enemies are pardonable prejudices; our victories, so far from being cruel, will be blessed by the conquered themselves.

History too often records actions which are worthy only of the most ferocious brutes, among whom, at long intervals, we can sometimes distinguish heroes. There is now reason to hope, that we have begun the history of men, of brothers, who, born for mutual happiness, agree even when they vary, since their object is the same, and their means only are different.

The records of the world do not afford a more striking example of the vanity of human schemes, and the short-sightedness of those who are celebrated for the most penetrating judgment, than the rapidity with which consequences, directly contrary to what were expected, followed each other from this period—a noblesse degraded and driven into exile—a clergy massacred—some of the most distinguished deputies of the tiers-etat brought to the scaffold by the influence of men, whose names were unknown to the public when the states-general were assembled. Mirabeau himself did not live long enough to be a witness or a victim of the cruellest of these scenes of anarchy and bloodshed, and to prove whether, as is the opinion of some, his extraordinary talents could have at once secured liberty and preserved the monarchy: but Bailly, the first president of the national assembly, was afterwards put to death, when a tribunal of assassins became the instruments of a thousand murders, and when, instead of liberty and equality, a despotism was established, which rendered the whole inhabitants of France *equally* slaves.

That the hopes of so many millions of men have been so miserably blasted; that they have missed the fair expectation of founding a government upon the solid basis of rational freedom, instead of rearing a castle in the air on the ideal pillars of impracticable equality, will be regretted by every friend of liberty and of humanity. While France is at war with Great Britain, it is the duty, and will be the endeavour, of every good British subject, to do all in his power to defeat her schemes, and assist his country against her; but how wretchedly narrowed must that man's mind be, by national or political prejudices, who joins in the despicable cant, that France is the natural enemy of Great Britain! Can the two most enlightened nations of the world, who cultivate philosophy, all the sciences, every liberal art, with more success than any other, be naturally enemies? To judge of the French nation from a few monsters, who have been engendered

in the course of this revolution; and, from the crimes which they have committed, to conclude that the people are naturally cruel and blood-thirsty, is reasoning as profoundly as those who about a century and a half ago, when England was under the yoke of an hypocritical usurper and a fanatical army, concluded that the English were all a set of hypocrites or fanatics. In spite of temporary confusions, the national characteristic of both countries remains the same. That of France has always been vivacity and ingenuity, her inhabitants being distinguished in every art to which they applied. In times of tranquillity they excelled most nations in the arts of peace; and since they have been driven to confine themselves to the art of war, it does not appear that they are inferior to the most warlike of their neighbours. I cannot help considering them, therefore, in point of ingenuity, and in every thing which requires the powers of understanding or genius, as the second nation in the world. My decided opinion is, that they are the second; but I should rather hope, that the other nations of Europe would rank them only as the third; and this I do on the principle of the ancient Roman, who said, that what convinced him that the Romans were the first nation in the world was, that all other nations allowed them to be the second.

When the delightful climate and cheering productions of the fine and fertile country of France are taken also into consideration, and, above all, when we recollect the natural temper of the inhabitants, so open to all the sources of cheerfulness and so shut against those of melancholy, which made them enjoy prosperity more and feel misfortune less than any other people; that enviable gaiety which taught them to banish ennui, relax the stiff features of formality, enliven gloom, and render joy more joyful; when we reflect on these circumstances, and on the unexampled calamities into which so many millions of human creatures, so formed, are involved; we must acknowledge that the sum total of human happiness destroyed is great.

er, than would have happened from the same calamities falling on the same number of any other people in the known world.

CHAPTER XI.

Means used to prejudice the People against the Nobles—Imprudent Conduct of the Count d'Artois—Eleven Soldiers of the French Foot Guards appeal to the People—are taken out of Prison and protected—Treasonable Expressions—Troops approach Paris and Versailles—Discourse of Mirabeau—An Address from the Assembly to the King—His answer—Secret Councils—General Alarm—Feast in the Elysian Fields—Dismission of M. Necker—Tumults at Paris.

As the refusal of the privileged orders to unite with the tiers-etat had been made use of as the pretext for the clamour and discontent to which the populace had been incited, it was naturally to be expected that, this source of discontent being removed at the desire of the king, tranquillity and confidence would be restored.

The universal rejoicing which took place at Paris and all over France seemed to indicate this; but those appearances were of short duration. Some deputies were still convinced, that the court meant the dissolution of the assembly, and waited only till a sufficient number of troops were drawn together near the capital to render the measure safe. These men were at great pains to spread this opinion, and to remind the public that the king had not desired the two orders to unite until he thought himself in personal danger by their remaining any longer separated; and that they had agreed to it at last not in compliance with the wishes or for the good of the people, but merely in obedience to the king, whose mandates they were ever ready to obey without any regard to the public benefit. To give this opinion the most rapid and extensive circulation, they used a means which in France far

exceeds the power of pamphlets or newspapers—namely, conveying it in a kind of witticism or play upon words. It was said, that the nobles and clergy were so fond of deliberating *par ordre*, that they could not be united to the commons otherwise than *par ordre*; and it was added, that the two privileged orders could not be prevailed on to deliberate *par tête*, until they found themselves in danger of being forced to deliberate *sans tête*. These jokes will not be thought marvelously bright; they were repeated, however, by nine out of ten who heard them, and had the effect which their authors intended.

The political theatres erected in the garden of the Palais Royal above mentioned continued their factious debates in the hearing of the populace; and many individuals were on those occasions represented as the determined enemies of the people, particularly M. Berthier, intendant de Paris, M. Foulon, conseiller d'etat, the count d'Artois, the prince of Condé, the duke of Bourbon, and many others. The impression against them, which was thus given to the populace, proved fatal in a short time to the two former, and contributed no doubt to the flight of the latter, which has been since thought to have had such ruinous consequences to the whole French noblesse.

The duke of Orleans was supposed, with great probability, to encourge these debates, and all the factious proceedings in this garden, which provoked the count d'Artois to a measure, than which nothing could have been more ill-timed.

It had long been the custom, as a mark of respect to the Orleans family, for a detachment of Swiss to mount guard at the Palais Royal. The count d'Artois was colonel of the Swiss guards. In a moment of indignation at the duke of Orleans, he gave orders that the guard should be discontinued, the immediate effect of which was, rendering himself more odious to the people, and the duke more respected; and what puts this inconsiderate mea-

sure in a ridiculous point of view, the count found it necessary to restore the guard a few days after it had been removed.

The heat and animosity against the court, which was continually kept alive in the centre of faction at the Palais Royal, diffused its influence over the whole circumference of Paris, and produced frequent disorders. The king's foot guards themselves, by their constant intercourse with the inhabitants of Paris and Versailles, were infected with the spirit of the times, and had shewn on some occasions a mutinous disposition, and on others had even joined in certain disorderly scenes in the streets and squares; so that a government, with the purest intentions, might have thought it expedient at this time, when, independent of other causes of tumult, there was a scarcity of provisions, to order a considerable reinforcement of troops towards the capital, with no other view than the maintenance of tranquillity and the protection of the inhabitants. But this consideration did not prevent the arrival of troops to the neighbourhood of Paris being imputed to some scheme of overawing the capital and dissolving the assembly; and this was not the suspicion of the factious only, but also of many well-meaning citizens of Paris. On account of the disorderly conduct of the French guards, they had been ordered to remain in their barracks; in contempt of which many of them had publicly appeared in the Palais Royal, and had been entertained by the people there with wine and other refreshments. For this and other acts of disobedience, eleven were confined in the prison of the Abbaye until a court-martial should be summoned for their trial. On the evening of the 30th of June, a letter was thrown into the Café de Foy, the most frequented in the Palais Royal. It was an appeal from the prisoners to the patriots in that coffeehouse from the cruelty and injustice of their officers. The letter was read, not only to the company within but to the groups without the coffeehouse. The soldiers represented themselves 'as the victims of their patriotism;

that their real crime was, their having refused to fire on the people during a late tumult; and that they were to be transported that very night to the infamous prison of the Bicêtre, if they were not protected by their fellow-citizens.'—'Shall we allow those brave soldiers to be punished, because they would not shed the blood of the people?' cried an orator mounted on a chair. 'Let us immediately to the Abbaye, and set them at liberty.' The cry *à l'Abbaye! à l'Abbaye!* was instantly heard on all sides: and without farther proof of the facts alleged by the prisoners, about two hundred men rushed out of the square of the Palais Royal. The band augmented on the way, and consisted of several thousands by the time they reached the prison. They immediately broke open the gates; and as they were returning with the prisoners, a troop of dragoons and another of hussars galloped up to them with sabres drawn. The people seized the reins of the horses, and asked if they meant to slaughter their friends. Those on horseback directly sheathed their swords, pulled off their helmets in proof of amity, and joined the crowd in the cry of *Vive la Nation!* The prisoners were then carried in triumph from the Abbaye, which is in the suburbs of St. Germain, to the Palais Royal on the other side of Seine, where they were received with acclamations of joy, treated with wine and provisions from the coffeehouses, and guarded during the night by a great number of armed citizens, who offered themselves for this service, on its being suggested that the prisoners might be seized in the night by the order of their commanding officer.

It was next determined to send a deputation to the national assembly in favour of the prisoners. Twenty of the most active of those who had effected their deliverance were chosen, and set out directly for Versailles. On their arrival they went to the house of M. Bailly, and delivered to him a letter in the name of the *public*, requesting the protection of the national assembly for the soldiers, whom they denominated the victims of their patriotism.

M. Bailly, having read this letter, said that he did not think the assembly could receive this deputation, which, although they pretended to have been sent by the public, had in truth no public character. This affair, however, produced a long debate, in which it was observed, that the noblesse in general were for the maintenance of discipline; the clergy, without expressing any indignation at the conduct of the prisoners, abstained nevertheless from any recommendation in their favour; while the deputies of the tiers entirely favoured them, and were for recommending them to the king's goodness. The debate terminated in a resolution, that the president should inform the deputation from Paris, that the assembly would in an address to the king beg of him 'to employ, for the establishment of public tranquillity, the infallible means of clemency.'

The deputation was sent accordingly. It was composed of deputies from all the three orders. The archbishop of Paris being of the number, delivered the address to the king, whose answer imported that he approved of what the assembly had done, and that he would within a short time let the states-general know his final determination. As nobody had any doubt what his final determination would be, the answer would have given general satisfaction, had his majesty not used the term *states-general*, which displeased some members. This term was suppressed, however, in the account published of the proceedings by the assembly.

In the meantime the eleven soldiers were lodged and feasted in the Hotel de Geneve contiguous to the Palais Royal, which, with other houses near it, was illuminated during the night; and in the day the prisoners were under the necessity of remaining constantly at the windows in sight of the populace.

The final answer of the king imported that the liberty of the soldiers would be the immediate consequence of the re-establishment of public order. Nobody could be deceived by these formalities: it was evident that the

king's authority was held as nothing, and that he had it not in his power either to punish the soldiers, or those who had forced the prison and set them at liberty. On receiving this answer, however, those who had the soldiers under their protection were instructed to conduct them to the Abbaye as prisoners; which they did, under the full persuasion that they were to be set at liberty by an order from the king. If this article was not expressly stipulated, it is evident that it was fully understood. For this reason the praises of the king's clemency, which were ostentatiously poured forth in the assembly on this occasion, were considered as ironical and insulting, and perhaps hastened the rash measures which were soon after adopted.

Every intemperate and insolent expression uttered by the deputies in the assembly, and many which fell from them in private conversation, were carefully repeated to the king by those who wished to prompt him to some more vigorous measures than any he had hitherto adopted.

None of the reports of this nature carried to court was likely to make more impression than what was reported of Mirabeau—namely, that on a certain occasion, while he declared himself a friend to monarchy, he had added, that 'it was of little importance whether they had Lewis XVI or Lewis XVII on the throne.' There is the more reason to believe that Mirabeau might have allowed this or some expression to the same tendency to have escaped from him, as he had often declared that it was a fortunate circumstance for Great Britain, that she had deviated from the direct hereditary succession in the act of settlement of the crown; and whether this observation was made in consequence of a plan in favour of the duke of Orleans, or, which is much more probable, was merely the effect of a speculative opinion unconnected with any formed design, the mention of such a thing, with the comments which would probably be made by those who repeated it, was likely to strike terror on the mind not

only of the king, but of his brothers and other princes of the blood, who detested the duke of Orleans.*

The strong impression made by those reports might contribute greatly to induce the king to adopt a more vigorous and decided plan of conduct than he had hitherto done.

To what extent this was meant to be carried cannot be known. That was probably never fixed upon by the parties themselves, and would have depended on future incidents; but it was evident, from the great numbers of troops which by repeated orders had been drawn nearer and nearer the capital, from the manner they were posted, and from the character of the marshal Broglio under whose command they were put, that some very important object was in view. It is not surprising, therefore, that the popular deputies were under apprehensions both for the existence of the assembly, and for their own personal liberty.

The alarm was hourly augmenting, and the danger loudly announced by Mirabeau, in a speech which he pronounced in the assembly on the 8th of July, from which what follows is an extract.—'Dejà un grand nombre de troupes nous environnoient, il en est arrivé d'avantage, il en arrive chaque jour; elles accourent de toutes parts. Trente-cinq mille hommes sont dejà repartis entre Paris et Versailles. On en attend vingt mille. Des trains d'artillerie les suivent; des points sont designés pour des batteries; on s'assure de toutes les communications; on intercepte tous les passages; nos chemins, nos ponts, nos promenades, sont changés en postes militaires. Des évenemens publics, des faits cachés, des ordres secrets, des contre-ordres précipités, les préparatifs

* There is no sufficient reason to suspect, that Mirabeau ever had formed a conspiracy for placing the duke of Orleans on the throne: all the length he ever went was for having him created lieutenant-general of the kingdom; and even that he soon abandoned, from the contempt he had for the character of the duke.

de la guerre,' en un mot, frappent tous les yeux et remplissent d'indignation tous les cœurs.

' De quel œil ce peuple, assailli de tant de calamités, verra-t-il cette foule de soldats oisifs venir lui disputer les restes de sa subsistance ? Le contraste de l'abondance des uns (du pain aux yeaux de celui qui a faim est l'abondance), le contraste de l'abondance des uns et de l'indigence des autres, de la sécurité du soldat, à qui la manne tombe sans qu'il ait jamais besoin de penser au lendemain, et des angoisses du peuple, qui n'obtient rien qu'au prix des travaux pénibles et des sueurs douloureuses ; ce contraste est fait pour porter le désespoir dans les cœurs !' *

This was one of the most eloquent speeches that Mirabeau ever pronounced, and made an irresistible impression on the assembly. He concluded by an observation which merits deep attention.—' Enfin, ont-ils prévu, les conseillers de ces mesures, ont-ils prévu les suites qu'elles entrainent pour la securité même du trône ? Ont-ils étudié dans l'histoire de tous les peuples comment les révolutions ont commencé, comment elles se sont opérées ? Ont-ils observé par quel enchâinement funeste de circonstances, les esprits les plus sages sont jettés hors de toutes les

* We were already surrounded by a great number of troops; more were ordered; more arrive every day; they hurry from all quarters. Thirty-five thousand are posted between Paris and Versailles; a reinforcement of twenty thousand is expected; artillery follow, and the proper places for erecting batteries are fixed upon; all passes are seized; our highways, our bridges, and our public walks, are changed into military posts. The events which are published, those which are endeavoured to be concealed, secret orders, sudden counter orders; in a word, all those warlike preparations strike every eye and fill every heart with indignation.

How will a people, assailed with so many calamities, bear that a crowd of idle soldiers should come and dispute with them the remnant of their provisions? The contrast between the luxury—(for bread is a luxury in the estimation of those who are hungry)—the contrast between the luxury enjoyed by one and the indigence of the other; the ease of the soldiers, to whom manna falls without their needing to think of to-morrow; and the painful efforts of the people, who obtain nothing but by hard labour and the sweat of their brows, is sufficient to make men desperate.

limites de la moderation, et par quelle impulsion terrible, un peuple énivré se précipite vers des excès dont la première idée l'eût fait frémir?' *

The consequence was an address from the assembly to the king, that he would order the troops which alarmed the citizens, and constrained the debates of the assembly, to withdraw from the neighbourhood of Paris and Versailles. The address was drawn up by Mirabeau. What follows is a short specimen.—'Prêts à resister à tous les commandemens arbitraires de ceux qui abusent de votre nom, parce qu'ils sont ennemis des loix; notre fidélité même nous ordonne cette résistance; et nous nous honorerons toujours de mériter les reproches que notre fermeté nous attire.

'Sire, nous vous en conjurons au nom de la patrie, au nom de votre bonheur, et de votre gloire; renvoyez vos soldats aux postes d'où vos conseillers les ont tirés; renvoyez cette artillerie, destinée à couvrir vos frontières; renvoyez surtout les troupes étrangeres, ces alliés de la nation, que nous payons pour défendre et non pour troubler nos foyers. Votre majesté n'en a pas besoin: eh pourquoi un monarque, adoré de vingt-cinq millions de François, feroit-il accourir à grands frais autour du trône quelques milliers d'etrangers? Sire, au milieu de vos enfans, soyez gardé par leur amour. . Les députés de la nation sont appellés à consacrer avec vous les droits eminens de la royauté, sur la base immuable de la liberté du peuple; mais lorsqu'ils remplissent leur devoir, lorsqu'ils cedent à leur raison, à leurs sentimens, les exposeriez-vous au soupçon de n'avoir cédé qu'à la crainte?' &c. †

* Have the counsellors of these measures foreseen or estimated what their consequences may be to the crown itself? Have they studied in the history of nations, how revolutions have begun, and how they operate? Have they observed, by what mournful concatenation of circumstances, men of the greatest prudence are sometimes led beyond the bounds of moderation, and with what a terrible impulse an intoxicated populace are hurried into excesses, of which the first idea would have shocked them?

† Determined to resist the arbitrary orders of those who abuse your name, because they are the enemies of law, our fidelity to your majesty

It was known that an address of this nature was to be moved, and several members were prepared to oppose it; but the impression which Mirabeau's speech made was so strong, that it was evident that all opposition would be vain; they also dreaded lest their opposition should be imputed to fear.

It was observed by the abbé Sieyes, that it was a maxim in the province of Britanny, that no troops should be allowed to come nearer than ten leagues to the place in which the states-general were assembled; and it was proposed by another deputy to impeach the advisers of this manœuvre, of ordering the troops so near to the assembly, that the execration of their cotemporaries, added he, might anticipate that of posterity. But, in the midst of all this warmth, M. Biauzat observed, that it would be but decent to expunge one article from the address proposed by Mirabeau, namely, that of establishing a guard of citizens, because it was too much to arm the people at the very time when they addressed the king to disarm himself. This was thought reasonable, and M. Biauzat's motion was adopted. The address was ordered to be read a second time, because the frequent and loud bursts of applause prevented it from being distinctly and connectedly

exacts this resistance, and we will always glory in deserving the reproaches which our firmness draws upon us.

We conjure you, sire, in the name of our native country, in the name of your own happiness and glory, send your soldiers to the posts from which your counsellors have drawn them; send back that artillery which was destined to defend the frontiers; above all, order back the foreign troops, those allies of the nation whom we pay that they may defend, not overawe, the inhabitants. Your majesty has no need of such auxiliaries. Why should a monarch, adored by five-and-twenty millions of Frenchmen, surround his throne at a great expense with some thousand strangers?

Sire, in the midst of your children, your best guard is their affection. The deputies of the nation are called to consecrate with you the eminent rights of royalty, on the immoveable basis of public liberty; but while they are fulfilling this duty, while they are obeying the dictates of reason and of affection, would you expose them to the suspicion that they were determined by fear only? &c.

heard at the first reading. A deputation of twenty-four members, six from the two first orders, and twelve from the third, were appointed to carry it to the king. Among the latter was Mirabeau himself, with one who has become most notorious since, and who, from the circumstance of being chosen for this deputation, it is probable, was in some degree distinguished even at this period, namely, Maximilian Robespierre.

The address being carried by the deputation to the palace was read by M. Clermont-Tonnerre to the king, who in his answer declared, 'that the frequent disorders in the capital were the sole reason for his having called the troops around Paris, as it was an essential part of his duty to watch over the tranquillity of that city, to protect the citizens, and prevent new disorders; that this measure, so far from putting any constraint on the debates of the assembly, would free the members from all dread of tumults and disorders. Nevertheless, if the presence of the troops, so necessary in the neighbourhood of Paris, gave umbrage, he was willing at the request of the assembly to transfer the states-general to Noyon or Soissons; in which case he himself should repair to Compeign, that he might maintain the requisite intercourse with the assembly.'

When the king's answer was read to the assembly, it was applauded by some, and did not seem displeasing to any. M. de Crillon said, that as his majesty had given his word, that he had no other view in ordering the troops to advance but the protection of his own person and of the capital, the assembly ought to rest satisfied. We have done our duty to the nation, he added, in requiring freedom to the assembly; we ought next to manifest our duty to the king, by shewing we have confidence in his royal word.

This reasoning of M. Crillon will not appear conclusive to all the world. None of the deputies, however, seemed inclined to express any want of confidence in the king's word until M. Mirabeau observed, that whatever reliance they might have on what the king had said, they could

have none on ministers, who were always ready to mislead his good intentions; that the not attending sufficiently to this distinction had often made the affectionate confidence which Frenchmen placed in their monarchs produce the effects of a vice rather than of a virtue, and had drawn the French nation, century after century, into much misery; but he hoped that their eyes would now be opened, unless they were resolved to act for ever the part of children, and continue always mutinous and always slavish. He proceeded to shew them that the king's answer was a complete refusal of their request; that they had not petitioned to have the assembly removed to any other place; but that the troops should be ordered to remove from the neighbourhood of Paris and Versailles; that if they were inclined to transfer their meetings elsewhere, Noyon or Soissons ought to be among the last places in which they should wish to assemble, because there they would be between the troops which invested Paris, and those which might be suddenly drawn from Flanders and Alsace.

Although the assembly were struck with the force of Mirabeau's reasoning, he did not prevail on them to renew the petition; and their moderation in this instance, which could only proceed from a sentiment of respect to the king, makes the violent measures that were immediately taken by the administration appear the more rash and impolitic.

Secret councils were held within the palace. The principal officers of the troops attended the king's levee every morning. Couriers were observed continually passing from Versailles to the different detachments posted at St. Cloud and Sèves, and not unfrequently in the middle of the night. The king's life guards were in constant activity; those who were not on guard within the palace were patrolling around it on horseback; all the Swiss guards were kept on duty near it; and cannon were placed facing the avenues.

Those appearances were sufficient of themselves to have roused expectation in all, and to have created terror in

some who were in situations to observe them. Various reports of mysterious import were also in circulation, and dark menacing expressions were whispered as having fallen from persons supposed to be in the secrets of the cabinet. A strong suspicion existed among the deputies, that some new plan was adopted: what it precisely was they could not know, but they were pretty certain, that whatever danger there might be must depend on the troops; and for that reason the greatest pains had been taken by the leaders of the popular party in the assembly and their friends at Paris to gain them. They knew that they had already succeeded in a considerable degree with regard to the French foot guards; and they strove, with their assistance and every other means in their power, to make the same impression on the other regiments as they arrived. Parties of citizens of both sexes were chosen to mix with the soldiers, and occasionally to treat them with wine. On the 10th of July, a scene took place on the plain called the Elysian Fields, adjacent to the gardens of the Tuilleries, which, it is probable, struck the court so much as to accelerate the execution of their plan. A considerable number of cannoniers, of French guards, of dragoons of different regiments, were invited to an entertainment prepared in these fields at the expense of some citizens of Paris, and in the sight of an immense crowd of spectators. The soldiers were plentifully feasted, and a sufficient quantity of wine was served to increase their gaiety, without rendering them disorderly. At eight in the evening the serjeants and corporals came in search of the soldiers; they were invited to partake in the feast, and to drink success to the tiers-etat; which they did, and returned in high good-humour to their barracks, singing the praises of the citizens of Paris.

The account of this scene which was carried to Versailles seems not only to have filled the king's new counsellors with alarm, but also to have deprived them of common prudence. With no certainty of the obedience of the troops, with even considerable reason to doubt it, and

an absolute certainty of the seditious disposition of the people, and of their enthusiastic attachment to M. Necker, it was hardly to be conceived that the first step the council would take should be the dismission of this favourite minister. On the 11th of July, however, he received an order to leave the kingdom in twenty-four hours. Without acquainting any individual even of his own family with the order he had received, he set out the same evening; and it was not publicly known at Versailles till the following day, when a new administration was announced, at the head of which were the marshal Broglio and M. de Breteuil.

Although nothing could have been less expected than the dismission of M. Necker at this particular time, yet nothing was more probable than the general alarm and indignation which it produced. Paris was filled with consternation; the shops and theatres were immediately shut; the people crowded the streets and squares; to increase the emotion and confusion, the busts of M. Necker and of the duke of Orleans, who was reported to have also been ordered into exile, were paraded through the streets covered with crape in mournful procession. A party of dragoons were foolishly ordered to attack the attending multitude, and break the busts. The prince de Lambesc was at the head of a body of cavalry on the Place of Lewis XV. Some stones were thrown; the cavalry made a charge on the crowd, and the prince was said to have wounded with his sabre an old man in the Tuilleries. The affrighted populace rushed from the garden into the streets, crying, *To arms!* the alarm bells were sounded; the armourers' shops were broken open; every one armed himself as he could; many of the French guards left their barracks to join the people; the cavalry that had been assembled to overawe them durst not appear; bodies of armed men patrolled the streets during the whole of this night of alarm, for the protection of the citizens. Some ruffians, however, under the same pretence, committed acts of robbery and pillage; but not a

twentieth part of the excesses took place that might have been expected at a time of such universal consternation.

On the following day it was proposed, that a regular body of militia should be immediately formed, as the best means of preventing a general pillage. This measure being approved, the execution was rendered easy by Paris having been divided into districts, on account of the late election of deputies for the states-general. Those electors assembled at their respective sections, classed the citizens, appointed commanders to each division, most of them officers retired from the service, and a body of 48,000 men was formed that very day, which entirely relieved the inhabitants from the fear of pillage in the ensuing night, and greatly diminished their apprehensions from the regular troops which surrounded them.*

A deputation from the committee assembled in the Hotel de Ville was sent to the national assembly at Versailles, acquainting them with the measures they had taken for restoring the public tranquillity. The assembly petitioned the king with more earnestness than ever to order the troops to be withdrawn, stating their presence as the cause of all the insurrections.

* This circumstance of the capital having been divided into districts, and the electors in each ascertained, had more influence on the revolution than is generally imagined; for, when any danger was dreaded, the electors were ordered to assemble at their respective districts, who had all an intercourse with each other; an army was instantly formed, and in some measure, according to their phrase, organized. Whatever benefit may have arisen from this on the present occasion, it certainly had one baneful effect, namely, that of giving the department of Paris a controul over all the other departments.

CHAPTER XII.

Reflections on the Influence of public Opinion—on Government—King's Answer to the Assembly's Address occasions ill-humour—Formation of an armed Force by the Inhabitants of Paris—80,000 Muskets found at the Invalides—Bastile attacked and taken—Murder of M. de Launay and others—Deputations from the Assembly to the King—Scene at the Orangerie—Speech of Mirabeau—The King changes his Measures—comes to the National Assembly—A Deputation sent to Paris—Rejoicings—The King visits Paris—Reflections.

It is highly probable from the character of Lewis XVI, that he was inclined to the suppression of many abuses of the ancient government, and sincerely wished the happiness of his subjects, even at the expense of a diminution of his own authority; but it was difficult to persuade the nation, that such were his wishes and intentions from the moment that it was believed he had been prevailed on to employ military force. Those who persuaded him to have recourse to such an expedient acted not only contrary to justice and prudence, but also contrary to the nature and disposition of the prince they pretended to serve; for the most ignorant of them must have known, that in the actual state of France it was impossible to controul the national assembly, to dissolve them, and to re-establish the ancient government by force, without so much bloodshed as he would have thought infinitely too dear a purchase for the objects to be obtained. In prevailing on the too easy-tempered monarch to adopt this measure, therefore, it is plain, that, like the generality of those who affect to be in a peculiar manner the friends of kings, their own places and pensions, and offices which they saw in danger, were all they were anxious to preserve, and for which they were willing to risk all the horrors of war, and to sacrifice the glory, happiness, and even the life of the prince to whom they professed such wonderful attachment.

Indeed, it was evident, that the public opinion on the subject of government was so universally changed, and the minds of the people so heated with the idea of freedom, that double the military force that was sufficient to maintain the ancient government could not re-establish the same system, nor sustain it for any length of time in France, even if it could have been re-established. It is not possible for a government to subsist long in any country where knowledge is pretty generally diffused, against the decided opinion and wishes of a great majority of the inhabitants; and a great majority of such inhabitants are seldom or never brought to be decidedly against their government unless it is oppressive. For, although it occasionally happens that ignorant men, and those who are needy from idleness, may be induced by the ambitious and designing to make a clamour against oppressions which they never felt, and for rights which they do not value, it is fortunate for the peace of society, that *unfounded* clamours of this kind oftener end in the disgrace or destruction of those who make them, than of the government against which they are made: but when grievances are felt by the most industrious, and acknowledged by a great majority of the most intelligent to proceed from the vices of the government, *that* government cannot exist long in the present state of men's minds all over Europe.

In Turkey, indeed, a very small military establishment in proportion to the population of the country is adequate to the purposes of government, and to keep the people in slavery; because they have no idea of any other kind of government but a despotic one. They are taught to believe, and in general they do believe, that it is the will of heaven that the descendants or successors of Mahomet should reign with uncontrolled sway over them; that it is their duty to submit to his orders as to the decrees of providence, however unaccountable or severe they may be; that resistance would be impious and fruitless in both cases, as in the one they would have the host of hea-

ven against them, and in the other not only that, but also the janissaries of the sultan.

The same opinion prevails, and of course the same despotism exists, all over Asia and Africa. The time was, when the right divine of kings to govern wrong, the absurd and impious doctrine, that the crown is held by divine, hereditary, and indefeasible right, was taught with success in Europe. That doctrine was exploded in England; and the consequence was the admirable constitution established in the year 1688, which every Briton has so much reason to bless and maintain.

The immense armies which a jealousy of the neighbouring powers renders necessary to be constantly kept up by some nations of Europe, are not the only cause of the arbitrary nature of their governments. The peasants and a very large proportion of the other inhabitants of Russia and a great part of Germany never knew freedom, have no ideas on government, and are rather pleased with the supreme and unlimited power of their sovereign, because it is from that alone they expect relief from the more intolerable oppression of their immediate lords. But give the majority of the inhabitants of Russia and Germany the same opinions that prevail in Great Britain; and an annihilation of the oppression of the lords, with a limitation of the sovereign's power, would follow in spite of the efforts, but more probably with the concurrence, of the armies.

Ignorance and imposture have been the chief and lasting supports of every despotic government. When ignorance is removed from any country, imposture and abuses must fly also; and although standing armies may continue to be the defenders, they will refuse to be the enslavers of their country.'*

* This is believed and dreaded by many whose importance and wealth arise from the oppressive privileges granted in the days of ignorance, and by those who fatten on abuses and in the enjoyment of sinecure offices. They wish every abuse to remain sacred and untouched, and fear nothing so much as the diffusion of knowledge. They consider the exercise of reason

However extraordinary it may appear, many circumstances evince, that, at the time when M. Necker was dismissed, the court of Versailles had no idea of the very critical state in which things were. The night of the 12th, which had spread such general terror at Paris, was spent by the courtiers at Versailles in dancing and revelry. The king's answer to this new address from the national assembly sufficiently shewed the small impression it had made. It imported, 'that he was the proper judge how to employ his troops, and where to place them; that, although some cities could maintain tranquillity within their walls by their own municipal force, the immense population of Paris rendered it impracticable there.'

The assembly were at no pains to conceal their ill-humour at this answer. They decreed, that M. Necker, and the other ministers who had been dismissed, retained the esteem and confidence of the assembly; that they considered the new ministers as responsible for the disasters that might attend the present measures, particularly that of advising the king not to send the troops away from Paris and Versailles, which the assembly persisted in requesting; finally, they put the public debt under the safeguard of the national honour, and ordered these resolutions to be presented to the king by the president, and with their former decrees to be printed, for the information of the public. The assembly continued sitting all the night.

reason as a curse to the lower classes of society; assert that ignorance is the greatest blessing that can befal them, and execrate philosophy and philosophers as the disturbers of the peace of mankind. In support of these assertions, they quote the crimes of those monsters of wickedness who have disgraced the French revolution and the cause of freedom. The question simply is, Whether it be expedient or not that rational creatures should improve and exercise their reason? If that is answered in the affirmative, it is to no purpose to say that some men use their reasoning powers to ill purposes: by the same train of reasoning they might endeavour to prove, that lamps and candles, and all the inventions by which men have contrived to obtain light and dissipate darkness, are pernicious to society, because house-breakers and murderers make use of dark lanterns.

The accounts of the king's answer, and the subsequent decrees and conduct of the assembly, arrived at Paris on the morning of the 13th, when the inhabitants had just learned, that the regiments encamped in the Elysian Fields had moved from thence, without the motive of their removal or the place to which they had gone being known. The most dismal apprehensions of an impending attack were conceived; rage and indignation augmented; the committee of electors in the Hotel de Ville redoubled their zeal for inrolling men and forming new battalions; what muskets could be found were distributed among those who had been first regimented; all the workmen were employed in making pikes and such arms as could be soonest formed, and were most suitable to undisciplined troops; the streets in some parts were unpaved in expectation of a bombardment: the women carried quantities of stones to the upper storeys, with the design of throwing them on the enemy as they marched through the street beneath; and the cries of vigilance and alarm resounded at intervals all the night in every quarter of the town, which was partially and dimly illuminated, so as to render the general gloom more striking.

The steadiness and address shown in so suddenly forming into some degree of regularity and subordination so large a body of men, in a capital so licentious as Paris, and this by no established authority, but entirely by a committee chosen by the electors, forms a strong contrast with the negligence and want of foresight of the cabinet at Versailles. After the bold measures of dismissing a most popular minister, forming a new administration of men disliked by the people, and rejecting the earnest and repeated petition of the national assembly, it was naturally to be expected that some means would have been used to prevent insurrections in the capital, where there was so much reason to think they would take place, and to suppress or render them abortive in case they should. It was natural to expect, that the Bastile would have been provided and strengthened, and that a place of so much

importance as the Hospital of Invalides would have been secured by a large detachment from the troops cantoned around Paris. None of these obvious measures were thought of.

On the 14th the Hospital of Invalides was forced, and 30,000 muskets found, which, with a variety of weapons discovered the same day at the Garde-Meuble, were distributed among the people, who being elevated by this success, hurried in crowds from the Invalides to the Bastile, in the resolution to assault and destroy that detested fortress. Some squadrons of dragoons had been observed that morning near the entrance of the suburbs of St. Antoine; and it was noticed at the same time that, contrary to custom, the cannon of the Bastile were pointed towards the principal street of the same quarter. A message had been sent by the committee at the town-house to M. de Launay, the governor, to remonstrate with him on this menacing appearance. It was while this was in agitation, that the Hospital of Invalides had been forced, and the arms seized, which had determined the people to exact that the Bastile should be delivered up to them also. That fortress was soon blockaded by the multitude: a deputation was sent from one district of Paris to make proposals to the governor; the deputy was attended by a promiscuous crowd, which, while he was conducted to the governor, were left in an outer court. This parley having proved ineffectual, the deputy retired; but at the same moment some of those in the outer court having advanced beyond the prescribed limits, and still continuing to advance, were checked by a fire from the garrison, which killed and wounded several.

It is probable that this happened through mistake on the one side or the other; but, if there was design, it seems most likely that it was on the part of the people, in attempting to surprise the garrison. The story which was spread, and generally believed at the time, of the governor's having allured them within the court, with a design to massacre them, is improbable and almost absurd.

He must have perceived, that such an open piece of treachery would end in his own destruction; he must have known that at all events he would be obliged to surrender soon; for, independent of many other necessaries, he was in want of provisions; and after such perfidious conduct, nothing could have saved him from the rage of the people. Whatever occasioned the first firing of the garrison upon the people, its immediate effect was to swell their rage into madness. Proposals of capitulation and indications of a disposition to surrender were no longer regarded. The fortress was assaulted with impetuosity, and defended feebly. However zealous the governor may have been, he could not inspire the garrison with the same ardour. After many proofs of the most daring intrepidity by those who headed the assault, the fortress was carried. Those who had the merit of the exploit saved M. de Launay from being immediately torn in pieces by the multitude which poured in from all quarters, and conducted him with difficulty and danger to the Hotel de Ville, but were unable to prevent his being massacred by the cowardly rabble which surrounded it, and who had no part in the taking of the Bastile. M. de Losme, his major, a person distinguished for his humanity to the prisoners, was at the same time a victim to the undistinguishing fury of those wretches. Their thirst of blood was so great, that although the marquis de Pilleport, who had been confined five years in the Bastile, rushed among them and proclaimed the humanity of M. de Losme to himself and other prisoners, he was not listened to, but insulted, wounded, and escaped not without difficulty with his life. M. de Flesselles, the prevôt des marchands, of a character less popular, but who seems to have been guilty of nothing which candour could have thought a proof of guilt, incurred the same fate, and the heads of all three being fixed upon pikes were carried in triumph through the streets.

To this shocking practice, begun in a moment of phrenzy, is owing perhaps that taste for bloody exhibitions,

which the Parisian populace are accused of possessing to such a degree. Even if the death of the persons were just, to gratify the multitude with the spectacle of carrying their heads on pikes is most injudicious; for it perverts the public mind, and has a tendency to create a taste for cruelty where it does not exist, and to cultivate and cherish it where it does!

Rumours of the enemy's approach became more frequent as the night advanced, and towards midnight it was asserted that they were just at hand. This induced a numerous body of the inhabitants to drag some cannon to the barrier *d'Enfer*; for as in the opinion of the multitude the enemy's great auxiliary lay in that quarter, it was universally agreed the attack would be made from thence. When the citizens arrived with their cannon, however, it was so dark that no enemy could be seen; and they made such a noise and clamour, that he could not have been heard, however near he might have been. To make sure in all events, however, they discharged their artillery and muskets, and then returned in triumph with the comfortable news to their fellow citizens, that the assailants were entirely defeated and dispersed.

That there was no account of the loss on the part of the enemy in this engagement is not wonderful: but, considering the darkness of the night, with the confusion and inexperience of the Parisian army, it is a little surprising that no mention was made of any killed or wounded among them by their own fire in this action.

The national assembly continued sitting from the 13th to the 15th. They had sent two new deputations to the king, on the old subject of ordering the forces to be removed. To the first the king answered, that he was doing all in his power for the re-establishment of public tranquillity, and with that view had ordered certain general officers to put themselves at the head of the citizens who had taken arms at Paris.

This was thought evasive and unsatisfactory. A new

deputation, at the head of which was the archbishop of Paris, was almost instantly sent with the same request, founded on the confusions and alarms in the capital. To this the king replied,—' You tear my heart more and more by the recital of the scenes at Paris. It is impossible that the orders I have given the troops can be the cause. I have no alteration to make to the answer I so lately gave you.'

If the imprudence of those who directed the councils of Lewis XVI was evident at the time when the states-general first assembled, as was attempted to be shewn, it must be admitted that his new counsellors seem in the present instance to have improved upon the imprudence of the old.

After it had been found impossible to resist the assembling of the states-general; after a double representation had been granted to the tiers-etat; after the voting by orders had been rejected, and the three orders had been melted down into one national assembly; after a numerous body of men had been formed into regiments and occupied the capital; and after the troops of the line had betrayed symptoms of defection;—to advise the king to give such an answer was foolish in the extreme, and exposing his authority to contempt and derision.

It was no doubt expected by those who had prevailed on the king to give this answer, that the army was ready to obey whatever orders they should receive from the duke of Broglio and the other officers attached to the court; but to what extreme neglect must it have been owing, that a circumstance of this importance was not ascertained before the king was advised to act and speak in this manner; and if the army *had* been ready to obey, when the citizens were prepared to resist, what scenes of bloodshed and slaughter must have been the consequence! —Scenes so revolting to the disposition of Lewis XVI, that he could not have persevered in countenancing them, even although he had thought them the only means of securing his crown.

Those therefore who are of opinion that such counsel would have been politic and wise to a prince of a different character, will still think it was injudiciously given to one who, although he might be prevailed on to adopt it through persuasion, was sure to relinquish it from principle and feeling, before it could produce the desired effect.

On the morning of the 15th it was decreed that another deputation should be sent to the king, with a remonstrance conceived in stronger terms than any of the preceding. The following sentiment was much applauded.—*The French adore their king, but they are no longer inclined to be under the necessity of fearing him.*

An incident of the preceding day had given much offence. Among the troops cantoned in Versailles, a regiment of German hussars were encamped in the orangerie of the palace. The queen, M. d'Artois, madame de Polignac, and other persons of both sexes belonging to the court, had thought proper to walk into the orangerie at this time, and were no doubt received by the troops with every demonstration of joy. These circumstances Mirabeau thought were of sufficient importance to be communicated to the king by the deputation. With all the exaggerations of eloquence, he desired them to inform his majesty,—'Que les hordes étrangères dont nous sommes investis ont reçu hier la visite des princes, des princesses, des favoris, des favorites, et leurs caresses, et leurs exhortations, et leurs présens. Dites-lui, que toute la nuit les satellites étrangers, gorgés d'or et de vin, ont prédit dans leurs chants impies l'asservissement de la France, et que leurs vœux brutaux invoquoient la destruction de l'assemblée nationale. Dites-lui, que, dans son palais même, les courtisans ont mêlé leur danses au son de cette musique barbare, et que telle fut l'avant scene de la St. Barthelemy.'*

* The bands of foreign troops by which we are surrounded were visited yesterday by the princes, the princesses, the favourites male and female of the court, and were caressed by them, received presents from them,

As this deputation were about to go out of the hall, they were prevented by the entrance of the duke of Liancourt. That nobleman had in the middle of the preceding night obtained an audience of his majesty, and made such a representation of the state of Paris, and the dangers with which the royal family were threatened if a change of measures was not immediately adopted, as determined the king to order the troops to be withdrawn; and the duke at the same time announced his majesty's gracious intention of coming in person to the assembly to give them this assurance.

The immediate effect of this news was a shout of joy. This natural demonstration of grateful sensibility was checked by one deputy, whose conduct, it is probable, was more under the influence of a cool head than a warm heart. He observed, that 'such demonstrations of satisfaction formed a revolting contrast with the calamities which the people had already undergone; that to receive the king with severe and serious respect was more suitable to the sad posture of affairs; that the silence of the people often proved an useful lesson to kings.'

The discourse of this philosopher produced a temporary suppression of feeling and an affectation of formality. The king was received with the most profound silence, although the deputies must have been struck at seeing him appear in a style so different from that in which they had been accustomed to view him, without pomp, almost without attendants, and in the plainest dress. Standing and uncovered, he addressed them in the most conciliatory terms, professing his sorrow for the disorders at Paris, his regard for the assembly, and assuring them that the reports of any design on their personal liberty were calumnious. He ended by declaring that he had ordered

and were exhorted by them to perseverance. Tell the king, that those favoured mercenaries, inflamed with wine, predicted in their impious songs the subjugation of France, and with brutal fury invoked the destruction of the national assembly. Tell him, that even in his palace the courtiers danced to that barbarous music; and remind him that scenes of the same nature were the harbingers of St. Bartholomew.

the troops to remove from the neighbourhood of the capital.

This discourse was not heard to an end without interruption. The emotion it produced was too powerful for the stern maxims above mentioned. Feeling overcame philosophy, and the hall resounded with shouts of applause.

When the king withdrew, all the deputies (for this assembly was not composed of such callous materials as the succeeding ones)—all the deputies followed, and forming a respectful ring around his person attended him to the palace, in the balcony of which the queen appeared with the dauphin in her arms, whom she presented to the applauding multitude. An account of this agreeable alteration of affairs was sent to Paris. The committee of electors were permanently sitting in the town-hall, forming the different corps of militia, and naming the officers. Having armed them in the best manner the present circumstances would permit, they gave them the name of national guards, and appointed M. de la Fayette their commander. M. Bailly was at the same time chosen mayor of Paris, under which appellation he exercised the same functions that were formerly exercised under the title of Prévôt des Marchands, which was abolished.

A deputation of eighty-four of the most distinguished members of the national assembly followed the accounts of the late events at Versailles to the metropolis. This deputation was met by the whole of the Parisian militia. The deputies, having come out of their carriages at the Barriere, were conducted to the Hotel de Ville, amidst the acclamations of the citizens of both sexes, who, in the streets, from the windows and the tops of houses, hailed them as the saviours of their country.

The dukes of Rochefoucault and Liancourt, M. Clermont-Tonnerre, Lally-Tolendal, and others, the most eminent members of this deputation, addressed the committee in the Hotel de Ville in particular discourses, the tendency of which was to conciliate the minds of the citi-

zens to the king, to place his late conduct in the least unfavourable point of view, and to assure them that his wishes were for the happiness of the people.—'Your good king,' said M. de Lally, 'has been deluded by calumny; suspicions were instilled into his mind of that nation which he has the honour and happiness of governing: but we have unveiled the truth before his eyes; he is sensible of having been deceived; he has thrown himself into the arms of your national assembly; he puts his trust in them, or rather in you, and will henceforth be guided by their counsels, that is, by yours.

From the Hotel de Ville the deputies were conducted to the church of Nôtre-Dame, where Te Deum was performed, in gratitude to the Supreme Being for the happy agreement between the king and the national representatives, and for the public prosperity which was expected to be the consequence.

The manifestations of joy were so universal, and their expressions of attachment to the king so warm, that a stranger who had entered Paris at that time would have thought it the most loyal town in Europe. For the eagerness with which the populace of all countries seize every event which fortuitously occurs, or is designedly held forth to them, as a cause of rejoicing, is often mistaken for a proof of their genuine satisfaction in that event. It should be remembered, however, that the multitude love noise and riot and acclamation and illumination, independent of any satisfaction in the event, or any love or regard for the general or admiral, or popular leader or monarch, who serves as a pretext for their indulging their favourite passion. This seems to be common to the populace of all countries: what distinguishes that of France is the wonderful rapidity with which they fly from the extremes of love to those of hatred, and from admiration to contempt, which makes them cry *Vive le Roi!* one day, with the same sincerity that they cry *Vive Petion!* another; and they accompany Egalité to the scaffold with as much exultation

as they had before shewn in parading the busts of Orleans through the streets.

There is every reason to believe, that MM. Cazales, Mounier, Malouet, as well as the members of this deputation before mentioned, and others, had no other view in assisting in the revolution than that of establishing monarchy on the basis of freedom, as the happiest government for their country. Such men of course must have felt satisfaction in observing the indications of returning royalty in the people; but there existed in the assembly and in the municipality of Paris men, at this time of no note, but who afterwards acted important parts, who viewed with an evil eye every indication of the nature above alluded to; because they feared that a return of confidence in the king would tend to the diminishing, perhaps the annihilation, of their own rising importance. The immense influence of the capital with the assembly probably first became apparent to them at this time, and was the ground-work of the structure of ambition they afterwards built. Those men, therefore, were active in sowing new seeds of suspicion in the minds of the people; they whispered that, notwithstanding the king's fair professions, fresh troops were on their march to Paris; and they trumped up a story, that an attempt had been made to seize again upon the Bastile for the use of the king. They employed agents to excite the people to clamour for the recal of M. Necker, and succeeded so effectually that a deputation was sent on the 16th of July from Paris to Versailles, the object of which was, that the assembly should insist on the dismission of the present ministers and the recal of M. Necker.

A motion was made accordingly to that effect. In the debate which this occasioned, M. Mounier gave it as his opinion, that the national assembly ought not to interfere in such appointments of the executive power, and produced the example of the parliament of Great Britain, which he asserted had never interfered in the choice of the king's ministers without the most ruinous consequences,

The reply which Mirabeau made to this argument is so remarkable, that I shall insert the following extract from his speech.—' S'il est une maxime impie et detestable, ce seroit celle qui interdiroit à l'assemblée nationale de declarer au monarque que son peuple n'a point de confiance dans ses ministres. Cette opinion attaque à la fois et la nature des choses, et les droits essentiels du peuple, et la loi de la responsabilité des ministres.

' Eh ! comment nous refuseriez-vous ce simple droit de declaration, vous qui nous accordez celui de les accuser, de les poursuivre, et de créer le tribunal qui devra punir ces artisans d'iniquités, dont, par une contradiction palpable, vous nous proposez de contempler les œuvres dans un respectueux silence ? Ne voyez-vous donc pas combien je fais aux ministres un meilleur sort que vous, combien je suis plus modéré ? Vous n'admettez aucun intervalle entre un morne silence et une dénonciation sanguinaire. Se taire ou punir, obeir ou frapper, voilà votre système ! Et moi, j'avertis avant de dénoncer ; je récuse avant de flétrir ; j'offre une retraite à l'inconsideration ou à l'incapacité avant de les traiter de crimes. Qui de nous a plus de mesure et d'equité ?

' Mais voyez la Grande-Bretagne ! que d'agitation populaire n'y occasionne pas ce droit que vous reclamez ! *C'est lui qui a perdu l'Angleterre*, dites vous——L'Angleterre est perdue ! Ah, Grand Dieu ! quelle sinistre nouvelle ! Eh ! par quelle latitude s'est-elle donc perdue ? Ou quel tremblement de terre, quelle convulsion de la nature a englouti cette île fameuse, cet inépuisable foyer de si grands exemples, cette terre classique des amis de la liberté ? Mais vous me rassurez : l'Angleterre fleurit encore pour l'eternelle instruction du monde ; l'Angleterre répare dans un glorieux silence les plaies qu'au milieu d'une fièvre ardente elle s'est faites ! L'Angleterre developpe tous les genres d'industrie, exploite tous les filons de la prospérité humaine, et tout-à-l'heure encore elle vient de remplir une grande lacune de sa constitution avec toute la vigueur de la plus énergique jeunesse, et

l'imposante maturité d'un peuple vieilli dans les affaires publiques. Vous ne pensiez donc qu'à quelques dissensions parlementaires (là comme ailleurs ce n'est souvent que du parlage qui n'a d'autre importance que l'intérêt de la loquacité);—ou plutôt c'est apparemment la dernière dissolution du parlement qui vous effraye?

'Qu'est-il arrivé, en effet, dans cette circonstance rare, où le roi d'Angleterre, étayé d'une très-foible minorité, n'a pas craint de combattre la formidable assemblée nationale et de la dissoudre? Soudain l'edifice phantastique d'une opposition colossale s'est écroulé sur ses frêles fondemens, sur cette coalition cupide et factieuse, qui sembloit menacer de tout envahir. Eh! quelle est la cause d'un changement si subit? C'est que le peuple etoit de l'avis du roi, et non de celui du parlement. Le chef de la nation dompta l'aristocratie legislative par un simple appel au peuple—à ce peuple qui n'a jamais qu'un interêt, parce que le bien public est essentiellement le sien. Ses représentans, revêtus d'une invisible puissance, et presque d'une veritable dictature, quand ils sont les organes de la volonté générale, ne sont que des pigmées impuissans, s'ils osent substituer à leur mission sacrée des vues interessées ou des passions particulières.'*

* If there ever was an impious and detestable maxim, it would be that which precluded the national assembly from declaring to the king, that his people placed no confidence in his ministers. Such an opinion attacks at once the nature of things, the essential rights of the people, and the responsibility of ministers.

But how can you refuse the simple right of such a declaration, after granting to us the right of accusing and prosecuting, and even of creating a tribunal for punishing those workers of iniquity, whose crimes, by a manifest contradiction, you desire us to contemplate in respectful silence? Do you not perceive then that I am more indulgent and moderate to the ministers than you? You admit no interval between a gloomy silence and a sanguinary accusation: to be silent or to punish, to obey or to strike, that is your system. As for me, I am for warning previous to accusing: I object before I dishonour: I offer a retreat to inconsiderateness or incapacity before I treat them as crimes. Which of us has most moderation and equity?

But we are desired to look at Great Britain. What disorders are produced there by this right which we wish to establish in France! That

right

It was carried, that an address should be presented to the king, expressive of the wishes of the assembly, that he would dismiss his present ministers. This was rendered superfluous, by the resignation of the new ministers; and it was announced to the assembly at the same time that the king had written to M. Necker, inviting him to return.

The same deputation from the electors at Paris to the national assembly at Versailles, which had brought the request of the former to address the king on those subjects, conveyed also their opinion, that a personal visit of the king to his faithful subjects in the capital would be highly acceptable, and perhaps the most expedient step he could possibly take in the present circumstances. This was no part of their public mission, but insinuated to the

right has ruined England——England is ruined, you say: ah! Great God! What dreadful news! Where, or by what means is England destroyed? By what earthquake or convulsion of nature has that famous island been swallowed up? That abounding theatre of great actions, that classic ground of liberty. But you remove my fears: England still flourishes for the eternal instruction of the world; England in a glorious tranquillity heals the wounds she had given herself during the delirium of a fever! England developes every species of industry, traces every source of human prosperity, and very lately she has filled up a great gap in her constitution with all the vigour and energy of youth, and all the maturity of a people long versed in politics. What—you only alluded to certain debates in parliament, which there, as elsewhere, often arise from nothing but the mere pleasure of speaking; or rather, perhaps, it is the last dissolution of parliament which frightens you.

What happened in effect on that extraordinary occasion, when the king of England, supported by a feeble minority, was not afraid to resist that formidable national assembly, and to dissolve it. Instantly the fantastic edifice of a colossal opposition was shaken from its feeble foundation, and that greedy and factious coalition, which threatened to carry all before it, was crushed. And what was the cause of so sudden a change? Because the people were of the king's opinion, and not of that of the parliament. The head of the nation overcame that legislative aristocracy by a simple appeal to the people—that people who never can have but one interest, because the public good is essentially theirs. Those representatives, clothed with invisible, almost with dictatorial power, when they are the organs of the general will, are only a set of impotent pigmies, when they dare to substitute their own private interest and passions in the place of the true object of their sacred mission.

deputies as their private sentiments, founded on the suspicions which still remained on the minds of the citizens of intended massacres, and which this mark of confidence from their monarch would tend to efface.

When this was mentioned to the king, he resolved upon the measure, notwithstanding the consternation which it spread over his family, and the apprehensions which he himself entertained for his own life. The news of this resolution was sent to Paris in the middle of the night.

The king left Versailles on the morning of the 17th of July, with only one carriage besides that in which he was himself. He was attended by the dukes of Villeroy and Vilquier, the marshal Beauveau, the count d'Estaing, and one or two other persons of the court. The militia of Versailles accompanied the carriages to Séve, where they were met by M. La Fayette, at the head of a large body of national guards: a party of cavalry headed the procession from Séve, followed by the French guards with their cannon: a deputation of the national assembly in their robes also attended, and were followed by the Parisian national guards. The procession was slow, and to the king would be the more gloomy that he no more heard the ancient cry of *Vive le Roi!* whereas that of *Vive la Nation!* was incessantly screamed from all sides. That this did not happen by accident was evident; for men were heard admonishing the people, *Ne crisz pas vive le Roi.* There are many reasons for believing that the king's journey to Paris and his reception there were planned by a few who had influence in the committee at Paris as well as in the assembly, with a view to strike him with terror, and bend his spirit to an acquiescence in their future projects. It is not therefore surprising that he looked pale, melancholy, and with disquietude. He was met at the barrier by the mayor, who, presenting him with the keys of the city, informed him, that they were the identical keys which had been presented to Henry IV, observing at the same time, in language more quaint than flattering, that Henry had *re-conquered* his people, whereas in the

present instance, the people had *re-conquered* their king. He told the king also, what he might otherwise not have believed, that this was a very glorious day for the French monarchy; and added, what might have occurred to him without being told, that it was a day which it was not likely his majesty would ever forget.—Whatever the king's thoughts were, he said nothing.

Finding himself equally embarrassed to answer all the fine speeches which were addressed to him on his arrival at the Hotel de Ville, his majesty observed nearly the same silence there.

Indeed it was impossible for him to assent to all that was expressed or implied in the different harangues on this occasion. In one, the truth of the bloody designs against the city of Paris, of which the court was accused, was strongly insinuated; in another, it was proposed to raise a monument to Lewis XVI, as the overthrower of the Bastile, and the restorer of liberty.

M. de Lally-Tolendal, who certainly was not of the number of those said to have planned the king's visit to Paris for the purpose above mentioned, expressed himself in language dictated equally by the spirit of loyalty and of freedom; observing, 'that the king himself was desirous that the representatives of the nation should share with him his authority, as he wished to reserve in his own hands no more than was necessary for the happiness of the people, and which their interest required should always belong to the crown.' And afterwards addressing the king, he said,—'Il n'est pas ici un seul homme qui ne soit prêt à verser pour vous, *pour votre autorité légitime*, jusqu'à la dernière goutte de son sang.'*

Unfortunately for the French nation, as well as for the monarch, succeeding events have not confirmed what an ardent desire that it were the case prompted M. de Lally to assert.

* There is not a single person here present, who is not ready to shed, for your majesty and your legal authority, the very last drop of his blood.

M. Bailly, the mayor, having presented the national cockade to the king, who appeared at the window with it attached to his hat, the populace in the square shouted; —the cry of *Vive le Roi!* was then heard for the first time that day, and resounded through the streets as the king returned from the town-house to Versailles, where he was expected with fearful inquietude by the queen and all his family.

The joy which the Parisians manifested after the king appeared with the national cockade, and their behaviour when he departed from Paris, have been thus described.—'Le départ du roi fut un vrai triomphe. Les Parisiens étoient ivres de leur amour pour lui; sa voiture étoit entourée de citoyens de toutes les classes; les uns étoient derrière la carrosse, ceux-ci à la portière, d'autres sur le siége du cocher, il y en avoit jusques sur l'impériale.'*

If the Parisians were intoxicated with love at this particular time, it must be acknowledged that they were intoxicated with rage soon after; for it seems to be in their nature to be always intoxicated with something or other.

The members of the new administration which had been so suddenly and imprudently formed, sensible of the quick transitions to which the French populace are liable, and by no means certain that they would be satisfied with their resignation, resolved to withdraw from the kingdom. The count d'Artois with his family, the princes of Condé and of Conti, with many of the nobility, did the same.

M. Foulon, who in the formation of the late ministry had been placed in the war department as an assistant to M. de Broglio, was not so fortunate as to escape out of France. Sensible of the people's prejudice against him, he kept himself concealed, and caused the report of his

* The Parisians were quite intoxicated with love for the king. His coach was surrounded with citizens of all classes; some were mounted behind the coach; some before, and some on the coach-box; there were even a few on the very top.

death to be spread abroad. He was discovered by the peasants while he was under hiding at a country house near Paris. Some of the enemies of this unhappy man had circulated the incredible story, that he had often declared, that, if he should ever be minister, he would make the people live on hay. The surest way of gaining the belief of the populace is to speak to their passions. This absurd expression was repeated by every mouth; and it kindled the more resentment in the breasts of the rabble at this time, because many of them actually experienced hunger from the existing scarcity.

The cruelties which those peasants, and some of the populace of Paris, committed on M. Foulon and his son-in-law M. Berthier, in spite of all the efforts of the mayor of Paris and the commander of the national guards to prevent them, are shocking to humanity, and disgusting to narrate.

M. de Flesselles, at that time the chief magistrate of Paris, was assassinated as he retired across the square from the Hotel de Ville. This murder was in consequence of a letter from him said to have been found in the pocket of De Launay. As the original letter never was produced, the report was probably a calumny invented by some enemy to destroy the man. For, at this period of anarchy, the credulity of the Parisians in giving belief to every calumny however absurd could only be equalled by their cruelty.

It was with difficulty that the wretched invalides, who had been brought prisoners from the Bastile to the town-house, were saved from the fury of the rabble, who wished to massacre them in cold blood in the square. They owed their preservation to the French foot guards, to whom the reduction of the Bastile was chiefly owing, and to M. Elle who led them on. Those brave men could not bear that their victory should be disgraced by such an act of cowardly cruelty, and requested of the multitude an amnesty to the prisoners as the most desirable reward they could receive for their own conduct.

It has been said, that the populace of Paris have become sanguinary and cruel by being familiarized to scenes of blood; but the circumstances of wanton barbarity with which the murders of Messrs. Foulon and Berthier were accompanied took place at the beginning of the revolution, and they have not been surpassed by any that have happened since: indeed, it is almost impossible they could.

It is well known, that profligacy and wickedness of every sort are pushed greater lengths in capitals, where vast numbers of mankind are assembled, than in the provinces. Paris has been long thought a place of greater profligacy than any other capital in Europe. At London the industry of the city serves as some check to the dissipation of Westminster. The other capital cities in Europe are smaller and poorer. Paris, although not so large nor so rich as London, was more luxurious; because, on account of the universality of the French language, the general imitation of French manners, and other reasons, it was not only the capital of France, but in some degree of all Europe, and was much more frequented by the rich and dissipated from every country than London ever was. At Paris, pleasure was not only to be had on easier terms, but was also served up more to the taste of foreigners in general than at London. There is a greater resort of industrious strangers to the latter, because of a more extensive field for industry; but undoubtedly a greater number of gamesters, sharpers, and adventurers of every denomination, from the different countries of Europe, were to be found at Paris than in any other town in the world. Such men became the ready agents of those who had the most criminal views in the progress of the revolution, and pushed the Parisians to a greater degree of violence against royalty than was shewn by the generality of the provinces; although it is evident that the former had a greater interest in the preservation of it. The city of Paris owes its most admired ornaments, some peculiar rights, and a great part

of its wealth, to the favour of the monarchs and to the neighbourhood of the court, and unquestionably will lose more by the continuation of the republican form of government than any part of France.

In the account of these excesses transmitted to the provinces, their cause was always assigned to a dreadful conspiracy against the national assembly and the national freedom, which had been carried on by the court and a part of the nobles. This account was industriously spread, and occasioned similar excesses in various provinces of France. Those of whom the municipal councils were composed being accused of favouring the old government, new common councils were appointed in many of the towns, consisting of men supposed to be of the most patriotic principles. The peasantry rose against certain unpopular noblemen, burned their castles, obliged them to fly for their lives, and a general rage against the noblesse seemed to spread all over the kingdom.

This proceeded, no doubt, in a considerable degree from the inferior order of people becoming more and more licentious by impunity and the hopes of pillage; but its becoming so universal forms a strong presumption also of a sense of oppression and ill-usage received by the peasants from their lords.

It is most fervently to be hoped, that, in Great Britain, government will always have sufficient energy to maintain the laws in force, and equally to protect the high from the seditious violence of the low, and the low from the insolent oppression of the high: but if, from whatever cause, this island were subjected to some political convulsion, and the populace excited against the higher orders of society, I am persuaded that the nobility and gentry of England, so far from being attacked with peculiar rancour by the peasantry of their own estates, would in general be protected and defended by them.

The yeomanry of England are a class of men, to which no other country has any thing exactly similar. The farmers of land love and respect the country gentlemen

and nobility of Great Britain, and have more reason to do so than the same set of men in any other nation. What is this owing to? In Great Britain popularity is of more consequence to a gentleman or nobleman than it was in France before the revolution, or is at present in Germany and other European countries. There are many, no doubt, who would shew attention and hospitality to their neighbours in the lower ranks of life, from the mere sentiments of benevolence and generosity; but it has been observed, that nothing has more influence in keeping those sentiments alive in the bosoms of the great, than their having something to ask or expect from the favour of the little. This is the case in England, at least once in seven years. The love and attachment of the county in which he lives is not only soothing to the heart, but also worthy of the ambition of the greatest nobleman of Great Britain. It increases his political importance, whether he supports or opposes the measures of administration. It is much to be feared, that those are apt to neglect and even despise the people, who think that they can do them neither good nor harm. The inferior orders in France had been long in this state of neglect and even contempt; when by the revolution they found that this was no longer the case, they were so impatient to prove it, that they began by doing mischief to shew that they were now of some importance. Liberty would be a greater blessing to a people who have been long in servitude, if it could be given by degrees: when it is obtained too suddenly, instead of being salutary, it is sometimes noxious—like victuals served up in profusion to men half famished, the consequence of which is often surfeit, and sometimes death.

CHAPTER XIII.

M. Necker is recalled—His triumphant Reception at Paris—recommends a general Amnesty—displeases the Sections—Some Members of the Assembly blame the conduct of M. Necker, who begins to lose his Popularity—Disorders all over France—The National Assembly greatly alarmed—Decrees of the fourth of August—The Duke of Rouchefoucalt—Sacrifices made by the Clergy.

M. Necker, who had left France in obedience to the king's order on the 11th of July, had passed by Brussels, and arrived at Basle on his way to Coppet near Geneva. He there received the letters from the king and national assembly, requesting his return to the situation he had just quitted in the administration.

M. Necker has taken great pains to be considered by the world in the light of a philosopher as well as a minister of state. It is fortunate for philosophers, that they can do pretty well without being ministers of state; but it is very unfortunate for a minister of state not to be somewhat of a philosopher. It is probable that he will have frequent occasions for the exercise of philosophy during his administration, and he will stand in need of a great deal of it, in case he should be turned suddenly out of it. After the universal obsequiousness to which ministers have been accustomed while in office, the wonderful alteration which they experience on their removal, however natural it may seem to the rest of the world, generally is so shocking to them, that instead of philosophers it is apt to make them misanthropes. There are, however, books in abundance in the library of every minister, tending to shew the folly of ambition, the inquietudes attending power, and how infinitely preferable a life of tranquillity and retirement is.

The love of power is perhaps more deeply rooted in the heart of man than any of his affections, and often survives them all; it is stronger than friendship; for we see

even those who are counted honest men abandon their friends to enjoy it; it is stronger than hatred; for we see men connect themselves with their enemies for the same purpose. And we have been assured, that the friends of M. Necker endeavoured to confirm him in the resolution of retirement, by pointing out the danger of resuming his office among a people so unsettled and so liable to excesses as the French; but notwithstanding all the remonstrances of his friends, and all his own philosophy, instead of proceeding to Coppet, he determined to return to Paris.

The signs of esteem and attachment which were exhibited in every village and town through which he passed in his way from Basle to Paris, the transports of joy which the Parisians manifested, and their acclamations on his entering their city, with the very honourable reception he met with from the national assembly, must have been peculiarly gratifying, and no doubt rendered him highly satisfied with his determination of returning; which, however, he soon after had much reason to repent. M. Necker has been accused of being too fond of the noisy applause of the multitude. The visit he made to the capital immediately after he had waited on the king and the national assembly has been imputed by many to a desire of prolonging the pleasure he took in hearing his own praise. But even the enemies of M. Necker allow, that he is a man of distinguished humanity. His impatience to visit Paris, therefore, may naturally be assigned to the desire of saving the life of M. Bezenval. As his intentions were known, he was waited for at the barrier by a multitude of the inhabitants; the streets and windows were crowded with admiring spectators; while his carriage was drawn to the Hotel de Ville, it was beheld with the same appearance of respect as the shrine of Genevieve, the tutelar saint of Paris, was formerly, when carried in procession through the streets. At the Hotel de Ville M. Necker was received by the electors with every mark of profound respect; the populace from all

parts of the city hurried to obtain a sight of the admired minister. He was requested to appear at the balcony, to gratify the multitude which filled the Place de Greve; and to render their gratification complete, his wife and daughter had the goodness to appear with him, one on the right, the other on the left. What rendered this sublime spectacle entirely new, was, that a man and his wife were hardly ever seen in public together at Paris. It required a revolution in the state, and all M. Necker's popularity, to prevent an exhibition so contrary to established manners from seeming ridiculous in the eyes of Parisians. So far from appearing ridiculous, M. Necker, although his wife was at his side, was beheld by the people in the square with the most enthusiastic admiration: His holiness himself, when from the balcony of St. Peter's he pronounces his benediction on the adoring multitude beneath, was never more loudly and more perseveringly applauded.

After returning from the balcony to the hall, M. Necker's first care was to inform the electors, that on his way to Paris having heard that Baron de Bezenval, commander of the Swiss guards, had been arrested by the militia of Villenaux, he had written in the baron's favour to the municipal officers of that town; but they had delayed setting him at liberty without an order from the permanent committee of the Hotel de Ville.

After relating those particulars, M. Necker gave the most honourable testimony regarding the character of M. Bezenval; representing how unjust it would appear in the eyes of all Europe to detain a meritorious officer as a prisoner, when he was on his way home by the leave of the king; and entreated, that orders might be immediately sent for releasing him. Perceiving that his proposal was approved of, and that the audience were in a cheerful and humane disposition, he proceeded in a pathetic and eloquent manner to lament the disorders which had already taken place, and to recommend a genera lamnesty as the surest means of restoring tranquillity, as infinitely the

greatest mark of regard which could be shewn to himself.

M. Necker's discourse was heard with rapture. Orders were sent for the release of M. Bezenval, and a general amnesty was decreed, *par acclamation*, by the general assembly of the electors.

M. Necker has been much censured for this part of his conduct. It has been said, that the granting of pardon, whether general or particular, legally belonged to the king, and that to apply elsewhere to obtain it was affrontive to his authority. The answer to this is, that the king at this period had no authority.

It has been also said, that he ought to have made this application to the national assembly, as the next existing power which could with any appearance of lawful authorite grant pardon or indemnity. The answer to this second objection is, that M. Necker plainly saw that the assembly were at that time overawed by the decided and active measures which had been taken by the electors, and durst not then interfere; whereas the assembly of electors having manifested the plenitude of their power in so many instances, he was eager to make it subservient in this instance to the cause of humanity and mercy; and it is to the honour of M. Necker, that when he saw that the interesting objects he had in view were not to be obtained by regular means, he tried those means which he thought would succeed, without regarding whether they were regular or not.

There were those present in the Hotel de Ville, who did not partake of the humane enthusiasm, who were enemies of M. Necker, and who immediately dispersed themselves among the districts, making an outcry against the council at the Hotel de Ville for having ordered the release of Bezenval, and for daring to send a proclamation for general pardon and peace round to the different municipalities. They attributed the proposal of M. Necker to an inclination to regain the favour of the court, and of all the conspirators against national freedom. The agitation of the

districts was so sudden, and the popular fury became so violent, that the council at the Hotel de Ville retracted their measures: and the committee of electors, which had been enabled to form an army of the turbulent citizens, sufficient to keep in check the regular troops which encircled Paris, and to storm the Bastile, found itself unable to maintain one illegal act of humanity and compassion.

One of the districts was so much afraid that M. Bezenval would be set free in consequence of the first order of the electors, thet they sent deputies to prevent it; and other districts sent a deputation to the national assembly to complain of the conduct of the electors, and to warn the assembly against giving a sanction to it.

The national assembly were well pleased to check the power of the assembly of electors, and would have been equally pleased to have been able to oppose that of those which succeeded them in the capital, namely, that body which was called the representative body of the commons of Paris; but the latter they durst not venture to touch.

Messrs. Mounier, Lally-Tolendal, Malouet, and others, men of probity, regretting that the act of the electors had ever been called into question, were for declaring the general principle, that, without any regard to popular clamours, no person should be arrested without a positive accusation, and that Bezenval should be directly set at liberty.

Mirabeau, who knew that the release of M. Bezenval and the indemnity had been granted by the electors to the general esteem for M. Necker, and in consequence of an eloquent and pathetic discourse pronounced by him at the Town-house, opposed the relief of M. Bezenval and the decree of amnesty. His motive is generally attributed to jealousy of M. Necker's popularity, and a strong inclination to render him suspected by or indifferent to the people: in which he soon after succeeded. 'Nous-mêmes n'avons pas le droit de prononcer une amnistie,' said he. 'Le pouvoir de faire grace, tant qu'il existe, réside éminemment dans la personne du monarque: je dis, tant qu'il existe; parce que c'est une grande question que de déter-

miner si ce pouvoir de faire grace peut exister, dans quelles mains il résidera s'il existe, et si les crimes contre les nations devroient jamais être remis,' &c. *

Mirabeau was not naturally an inhuman or blood-thirsty man: but on this occasion shewed himself a man of violent passions and of unjustifiable resentment; for in all probability it was merely to mortify one who had neglected him, and of whose popularity he was jealous, that he spoke against the pardon of a man he could not think guilty of any crime, and against a general indemnity, which, whether properly ordered or not, he knew to be highly expedient.

Robespierre, who was little known at this period, betrayed somewhat of that cruel and unrelenting spirit which since has spread such dread and horror all over France, by speaking on this occasion against pardon or amnesty. He seems also to have seized some of the hints thrown out by Mirabeau, and to have made use of them long afterwards as the foundation of part of his reasoning in the process against the king.

The assembly determined that a committee should be appointed to examine into the accusations; but being sensible, that, if M. Bezenval were conducted to Paris, all their authority could not protect him from the rage of the populace, they ordered that he should be carried to a castle of some strength near the place where he had been arrested, and there guarded till his trial.

Thus the earnest wishes of M. Necker were crossed and defeated when he seemed to be at the height of popularity, by the very people of whose applause he was so fond; and he had now reason to be convinced, that, whatever their regard and admiration of him might be, their

* We ourselves have not the right to pronounce an amnesty: the power of pardoning, while it shall exist, belongs to the king alone: I say, while it shall exist; because it is a matter of great importance to decide, whether this power of pardoning ought to exist, in whose hands it ought to be placed if allowed to exist, and whether crimes against nations ought ever to be forgiven.

thirst of blood, and rancour against those whom they considered as their enemies, was stronger. Any pleasure which he may have derived from the contemplation that he possessed the affection of such people, must have been mightily diminished after he made this discovery.

In his letter to the secretary of the common council of Paris, who first informed him of the sudden turn which had happened, M. Necker expresses himself in the following words.—' J'ai reçu la *triste* nouvelle que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de me communiquer. J'en rendrai compte au Roi. *Mon bonheur n'a guère duré.*' *

What shews of how very little importance the king was already become in the eyes of all parties is, that the mention made of him in this letter is the only notice that seems to have been taken of him in this whole transaction. An officer is arrested by the militia of a provincial town, as he is on his way to his native country: the king's minister, returning at the call of the nation to the capital, declares that the officer had his majesty's permission, and requires of the municipality to allow him to proceed: they refuse until they shall receive orders from a committee at Paris: the minister afterwards applies for the same purpose to this committee: but no more notice is taken of the king, than if he had not been in existence.

In fact, the king was already deprived of all authority, and what he had afterwards was no longer considered as an essential prerogative of the crown, but a gift of the national assembly. And it soon afterwards appeared, that the assembly were not able to maintain him even in the exercise of that share of power which they placed in his hands: for when, instead of an absolute veto on their decrees, the national assembly resolved that the king should only have a suspending one, it was found that he could not make use of it without raising a violent clamour, and

* I have received the sad news you did me the honour to transmit to me. I shall communicate them to the king. My happiness has not been of long duration.

exposing himself and his family to the outrages of the mob.

The vindictive disposition and excesses of the Parisian populace were to be regretted not only on account of their effects at Paris, but also on account of the example thereby given to the lower orders, and particularly the tenants of land, and the peasantry, all over France, among whom great disorders continued after some appearance of regularity had taken place in the capital. It will be naturally imagined, that many took advantage of the general confused state of the country, and made it a pretence for refusing to pay the taxes to government, and even the rents due to their landlords. Complaints of this were frequently made to the assembly, who thought proper to refer them to a committee, which was directed to make a report and suggest a remedy for so dangerous an evil.

The remedy which the committee recommended was, that the assembly should publish a solemn *declaration* of their entirely disapproving of the unlawful practice of refusing to pay taxes and rents, and advising all persons concerned to pay them regularly for the future. It is surprising that this committee, when they were recommending such efficacious means for putting a stop to unlawful practices, did not recommend at the same time a solemn proclamation against the unlawful practice of fornication, which is of still longer standing, and had as good a chance of being put an end to by a proclamation.

It would appear that the measure adopted had entirely failed; for while the national assembly were occupied at Versailles in framing that bill of rights which they intended as the foundation of their new constitution, accounts came from all quarters, that the spirit of revolt seemed to increase instead of diminishing in the provinces; that to a refusal of paying taxes and rents many instances of pillaging, robbery, and housebreaking, were added; that the nobility in particular were exposed to these depredations; that many of their family seats had

been plundered and demolished, and in some cases their wives and children abused and insulted in the grossest manner. As almost all the proprietors of land in the assembly, and the other most respectable deputies, received accounts to the same effect, they made a deep impression and spread a great alarm. Many letters of this nature were received on the 4th of August. When the assembly met in the evening, strong symptoms of vexation, anxiety, and terror, were visible in the countenances of the members, particularly those belonging to the two first orders, who seemed now convinced of the necessity of uniting without reserve with the third, as the only means of preserving their property, and securing their families from insult.

The extraordinary impressions with which the deputies were so severely and so suddenly affected, produced consequences as extraordinary and as sudden. While every one seemed engrossed with his own feelings, and waited to hear what might be proposed by some other, the viscount de Noailles opened the scene by asserting, that the people were driven to those excesses by the accumulation and weight of the burdens under which they laboured; that they were become desperate by the exaction of taxes which they could not pay, and feudal services above their strength; that it was now become as necessary for the safety of the rich as for the relief of the poor, that many sources of oppression should be immediately abolished, lest the country people should proceed farther lengths than they had hitherto done, and take upon themselves the task of doing themselves justice. He then enlarged on the glory which the nobility would derive from sacrificing private interest and importance to the public good; and concluded by moving, that those sources of tyranny and injustice should be abolished; that all public charges should be equally supported by the whole community, and all taxes levied in proportion to the income of each individual; that all feudal claims should be redeemable at a fair valuation; that corvées, and all rights of the

lords to the personal services of the peasantry, should be entirely abolished, and other grievances, under which the people suffered, alleviated.

The viscount de Noailles's motion was seconded by the duke d'Aiguillon, who made another tending to the same purpose, which created more surprise than the former, on account of the duke's ample estate and extensive royalties, which rendered his sacrifices greater, although his patriotism was perhaps only equal to that of the viscount.

When certain ancient feudal claims, which are indecent in themselves, and degrading to humanity, were begun to be enumerated, a cry of horror burst from the audience, and prevented the deputy from proceeding. This circumstance, however, increased the enthusiasm for reformation which animated the assembly. And the bright examples of the noble viscount and duke above mentioned, joined to the thundering applause with which their proposals were heard, excited great emulation. The virtues of self-denial and patriotism became so precious in the eyes of some who had never before seemed to put any great value upon them, that hardly any sacrifice was thought too dear for the purchase of even the reputation of possessing them, which was bid for on this occasion, like a valuable statue or picture at an auction, with an ardour which drew fresh applause, excited fresh emulation, and made the nobles outbid each other in a manner that astonished the galleries, and delighted the commons, who, having no sacrifices to make, could not enter into the competition.

Some of the nobles, however, were provoked at certain sacrifices which affected themselves more than the proposers, and in revenge they moved for different sacrifices which affected the others more than themselves. This kind of retaliation is not unnatural to lofty minds, if Homer was a judge of nature.—'If I am to be deprived of my mistress,' said Agamemnon to Achilles, 'you shall be deprived of yours also.' In what other particulars the nobles in question resembled the Greek heroes, I

know not; but it is said that to the heat raised by this collision of emulation, patriotism, and revenge, the heat and expansion of heart produced by wine were added—so that on the whole more was obtained for the people at this one sitting after dinner, than the most sanguine reformer had expected in many days.

The deputies of certain provinces which enjoyed peculiar privileges, took upon themselves, without instructions from their constituents, to propose, that the charters and franchises of these provinces should be added to the sacrifices of this memorable night.

The clergy had hitherto remained astonished and silent spectators of a scene so awful and unexpected; and a motion having been made to put an end to the meeting, the president was proceeding accordingly, when suddenly he made a pause, and reproached himself for want of attention in being about 'prematurely to close the meeting before any of the venerable body of the clergy, ever sympathising with the distresses of the people, had declared their sentiments on so interesting a subject.'

There was no evading this apostrophe. The bishops of Nancy and Chartres spoke in the name of their brethren. The first not only approved of a motion which had been made that the feudal rights, and all other jurisdictions of lords of manors established in the same manner, should be abolished; but he proposed besides, that the price of the ransom of ecclesiastical feudalities should be applied to the relief of the poorer part of the ecclesiastical body, and not to the profit of the actual incumbent.

The bishop of Chartres, after insisting on the injustice of the game laws, and painting in glowing colours the cruelty of obliging the poor farmer to be the passive witness of ravages on his property, proposed the suppression of those laws and all the pretended rights of the chace.

The exclusive rights of fisheries, to warrens, and to dovecots, all of which considerably affected the revenue of the clergy, were also abolished; and some dignitaries

of the church, who possessed more benefices than one, declared that they were resolved to limit themselves to a single one.

The duke de la Rochefoucault, who was a friend to liberty and had promoted the revolution, was however no republican, but a well-wisher to monarchy, and personally attached to the king, took this opportunity of doing honour to the monarch he loved, by reminding the assembly that his majesty had anticipated one of their decrees, by having already given freedom to all the serfs in his own demesnes; and the duke at the same time did honour to his own heart, by expressing a wish that before the end of the sessions the assembly would take into consideration the deplorable condition of the negroes in their colonies.

How came this enthusiastic friend of freedom to prefer a monarchical form of government to a republican? Not surely for the sake of the monarch or his family. Were it even clear that royalty conveyed happiness, he could not have preferred the happiness of a single family to that of the millions who inhabit France. No; it must have been from a conviction that a well-regulated hereditary monarchy would be more conducive to the happiness of those millions than a republic. The proofs which experience has afforded of the truth of that opinion are the only right which kings have to their crowns; a good king would not wish for a stronger; a wise one could hardly believe they ever had any other.

It would have been fortunate for the French nation, that they had adhered to this opinion of the duke de Rochefoucault. They have thought otherwise; it is their affair. Perhaps they may come of themselves to alter their way of thinking on that subject; which is certainly most likely to happen when no attempt is made to force them to it; but should *they* endeavour to turn monarchies into republics, or should monarchies endeavour to force republics to assume a monarchical form of government, there can be no tranquillity or happiness in Europe. If indeed it had been usual for the different nations of Europe to ma-

nifest a disinterested regard for the prosperity of each other; if there were many proofs recorded in history, that, so far from taking advantage of the accidental distresses or calamities in which any of them were involved, the others had shewn a readiness to relieve their unfortunate neighbours, and to extricate them from their difficulties; then indeed the case would be different: but as there are not many instances of this nature on record, it is not surprising that the French should not consider the hints they have received from their neighbours to renounce the republican and resume their old form of government, as proofs of good-will, or that they hesitate a little before they determine to take them.

To return to the national assembly.—In commemoration of the sacrifices made, this famous sitting concluded with a decree conferring the title of restorer of French liberty on the king; and a deputation was appointed to inform him of this, and to request his presence at a Te Deum to be celebrated throughout the kingdom; which ceremony was performed accordingly, attended by the king and the whole assembly.

The third order were so expressive of their admiration of the generosity and self-denial that appeared in the conduct of the nobility and clergy, that it might have been expected they would have tried to check an enthusiasm which, if carried farther, might prove too injurious to those two orders; and this was the more to be expected from men of candour and equity, as most of the deputies of the tiers-etat could not imitate the other two orders in making such sacrifices, and were little affected in point of interest, by those which had been proposed.

It appears, however, that the commons did not labour under any delicate distress of this kind; for the committee appointed to reduce the various proposals that had been made into the form of a law, included the tithes as a feudal vassalage or tax levied on the lands, which had never entered into the minds of the clergy, who considered ecclesiastical tithes as a rent-charge for the maintenance of

the church, for which a proper allowance had been made to the actual proprietors in the purchase of their estates; and therefore they imagined that the legislature could not without injustice transfer this from them, whose property it was, to the landlords, who had no claim to it. This article being strongly and justly objected to, produced several warm debates, in which the abbé Sieyes made the most conspicuous figure, defending the rights of the church, and proving the injustice of stripping the clergy in this arbitrary manner. The abbé was not listened to on this occasion with that attention which had been usually paid to him, and which the strength of his reasoning deserved. He pleaded the cause of the church on the principles of plain good sense and equity, without calling the assistance of sophistry, or giving the least hint of the divine right of tithes. Had the abbé been inclined to make use of them, he knew that no arguments derived from superstition could have weight with his present audience; he found that those founded on justice had as little.

The impatience of the audience during the abbé's reasoning did not arise from any eagerness to answer his arguments; it was the impatience which men predetermined to be unjust feel on hearing their injustice made manifest. He concluded one of his speeches by observing, that 'if they wished to be *free*, they should begin by being *just*.'

A country vicar, perceiving that the unanswerable discourses of the abbé produced no effect, with great vehemence addressed the commons in these words.—'Was it to plunder us that you invited us to join you in the name of the *God of Peace*?'

The nobles were as unrelenting as the commons. They seem to have been actuated in some degree by resentment against the clergy for having abandoned them on the important question of the manner of voting; and the ungrateful return which the clergy now met with from the commons, it is probable, was more sensibly felt by them

than the retaliation of the nobles. But the nobles acted very unwisely in indulging their resentment in this manner. Many of the greatest mischiefs in society spring from the secret satisfaction which one class of men sometimes take, or the indifference at least which they feel when the rights of another class is attacked; without considering, that the moment a law is passed which is oppressive on any set of men, a source of oppression is opened against every set of men. Even those, therefore, who respect no man's rights but their own, are strongly interested to forget private resentment, and to defend the rights of all their neighbours.

The coolest heads among the clergy, perceiving that the nobles and commons were united against them, and thinking that longer resistance would only serve to irritate those on whom they and their brethren must at last rely for support, determined to submit with the best grace they could.

The archbishop of Paris, when the contest was at the warmest, and the noise at the height, arose and declared in the name of his brethren, that their only anxiety was that divine worship might continue to be celebrated with dignity; that the gospel might be preached by virtuous and well-instructed clergymen; that the poor might be relieved and succoured; and should these purposes be effected, that they would resign the whole of their tithes into the hands of the nation, and for their own future support trust entirely to the justice of their country.

As the archbishop continued his discourse, and the purport of it opened upon the audience, the blustering of the contest which had so long prevailed in the hall gradually abated, and the noise at last subsided into a general whisper of satisfaction, as a storm subsides at the appearance of the twin stars—

> Defluit saxis agitatus humor;
> Concidunt venti, fugiuntque nubes,
> Et minax ——— ponto
> Unda recumbit.

Some of the people in the galleries, after remaining a few moments silent and motionless, clapped their hands in applause of the great sacrifice which the clergy had offered; but the generality of the assembly, considering it as a constrained and not a free-will offering, while they rejoiced at the sacrifice, derided the sacrificers.

CHAPTER XIV.

Reflections on the Cruelty to which the Clergy were subjected—On the Power to be given to the King—The Project of two Chambers—The Galleries of the National Assembly—Manœuvres respecting the Audience—A Feast given by the Gardes-du-Corps to the Regiment of Flanders at Versailles—The National Assembly displeased with the King's Answer to their Address—The Transactions of the Entertainment misrepresented—Insurrection at Paris—M. La Fayette endeavours to quell it, without effect—The first Conductors of the Revolution justified—M. La Fayette marches with 20,000 men to Versailles.

THE national assembly have treated the clergy of France something in the same cruel manner that the Roman senate behaved in the third Punic war to the Carthaginians.

When the Carthaginians heard of the hostile preparations of the Romans, conscious of their own weakness, they declared themselves willing to submit to the discretion of the Roman people, and to the terms of peace they should exact. The senate applauded their prudence, and required hostages as pledges of their fidelity. The hostages were sent. The Roman consul, who was at Utica with his army, then required, in the name of the senate, that the Carthaginians should deliver up their arms and warlike stores; such things being useless to a people now under the protection of the Roman republic. The magistrates of Carthage were shocked at the rigour of this demand: after some hesitation, however, they acquiesced, saying they had an unbounded confidence in the justice of the senate. The consul, after highly praising their conduct,

informed them that they must abandon Carthage, which it was the pleasure of the senate should be destroyed.

With similar perfidy the clergy of France were allured to join in the revolution, to make many sacrifices in the hopes of being protected in the possession of what remained, and then obliged to rely on the justice of the assembly, which stripped them of the whole, except on conditions which their consciences prevented many of them from agreeing to. This refusal being represented as a crime, the unhappy clergy have at various periods been persecuted and massacred, all over the nation. The most striking difference between the cases is, that those whom the Romans treated in this perfidious and cruel manner had been for ages their ancient and inveterate enemies; whereas those whom the national assembly treated thus unjustly were their own countrymen, and that part of their countrymen whose peculiar duty it was to teach benevolence and good-will towards mankind.

One of the most important questions that was agitated by the national assembly, while they were employed in forming the constitution, regarded the degree of power to be placed in the hands of the king, and particularly whether his consent should be made necessary for giving the force of law to the decrees of the assembly. The Latin word *veto*, of which the tribunes of the Roman people made use when they gave a negative to a law, was adopted on this occasion to express the king's negative. The debates on this subject continued from the end of August till the middle of September, were carried on with extraordinary heat, and created a division in the assembly, which has continued through subsequent legislatures with augmenting hatred.

On this matter there were three opinions.

1. That the decrees of the assembly should be law, without any sanction from the king.

2. That the king should have an absolute negative on all decrees.

3. That the king's negative should not be absolute, but only suspensive.

During the debates on this subject it appeared, that the majority of the members were so apprehensive of a return of the old tyranny, that they overlooked many other dangers. They were so solicitous to secure the legislative power from the attempts of the executive, that they seem to have forgotten that it was a monarchical constitution which they had professed to establish; and weakened the executive power to such a degree as almost to render it useless;—the consequence of which has been, that, in the progress of the revolution, the assembly itself has been insulted in the grossest manner, and the monarchy overturned.

Mirabeau, who wished to preserve the monarchy while he laboured to give freedom to his country, endeavoured to shew, that giving an absolute veto to the king tended to both those purposes; that it would prove a check also to crude and precipitate decrees, and might on some future occasion prevent an ambitious majority from tyrannizing over, perhaps expelling, the members who opposed them, and forming at last an odious and despotic aristocracy with the name of a republic.

All Mirabeau's eloquence in support of the absolute veto proved ineffectual within the assembly; and without doors the prejudice against it was still greater. The open and unrestrained discussion of a political question was still a new enjoyment in France, and on the present occasion was pursued with all that ardour which new pleasures generally excite in that country. Very few understood what the word meant, or ever troubled themselves to inquire: yet men, women, and children, although according to the custom of the country eternally speaking, spoke of nothing, during several weeks, but the veto. In the same manner as some years ago, when the whole nation took a fancy to be eternally singing, they sang no other song but Malbrouck. To harangue against the veto in public places became a mark of patriotism; lists of

the members who spoke in its favour were handed about, and all those whose names were in the lists were execrated as traitors. In short, upon this as on many other occasions during the revolution, a violent storm was raised, and furious spirits rode in the whirlwind and directed it.

The most judicious as well as the most eloquent members were for giving the king an absolute negative on the decrees of the assembly. The majority, however, were so much intimidated by the clamours without doors, that they adopted the suspensive veto; decreeing that it should continue in force for two successive legislatures; but, if the third should approve of the suspended decree, it should then become a law without the royal sanction.

This measure, which was recommended by Necker and is praised by Rabaud de Saint Etienne, did not satisfy the king, and was still more displeasing to the people, who perceived little or no difference between this and the absolute veto. Mirabeau shewed more profound political knowledge than M. Necker or Rabaud, by placing himself among those who supported it; and at the same time he gave a proof that his love of popularity could not in a point so material make him act contrary to his opinion. The idea, that giving to the king an absolute veto on the acts of the assembly would gradually bring back the old despotism was what influenced the deputies who opposed it. Mirabeau saw that other articles in the constitution would prevent such an effect, and that the spirit of the times alone rendered it almost impossible. He probably also foresaw, that the suspensive veto would become a continual cause of jealousy and discord between the king and the assembly. But even if this prerogative, which seems to have been highly necessary, had been established in the constitution, still a prudent minister would not have advised the king to make use of it, until the jealousies of the people were dissipated, and the government regularly formed; and perhaps not even then, unless it was evident that the monarch, in giving his ne-

gative to a decree of the assembly, had a respectable minority of the assembly, and a very decided majority of the people at large, of his opinion. With all these precautions, the veto in particular instances might still be erroneously given: the king, the minority of the assembly, and the majority of the public, might be in the wrong, and the majority of the assembly in the right: yet if the king's negative were never used except in such circumstances, it never could create jealousy of the power of the crown on the one hand, or fears for the freedom of the nation on the other.

The suspensive veto became, soon after the king's acceptance of the constitution, an object of jealousy, and was no sooner made use of than it became the cause, or was made the pretext, of the most fatal discord.

The next important subject of debate happened in consequence of a proposal made by M. de Lally-Tolendal in the name of the commission of constitution, that the legislature should consist of a lower and upper house. According to the first idea, the upper house was to be composed of members chosen for life. M. Mounier preferred their being chosen for seven years.

Those who had opposed the veto were as violent against the two chambers or houses. They dreaded that the influence of the court would at some time or other form the upper house of the higher nobility, and render it hereditary. They endeavoured to ridicule the idea of a balance of power in the various branches of the legislature; and shutting their eyes to all the advantages of the British constitution, they declaimed against its abuses. Yet, if two houses have been found beneficial in the British legislature, and if two chambers of representatives have been of use in the American, by affording time for reflection before decrees are finally passed; so far from opposing their introduction, it might have been expected of those members who were best acquainted with the characters of Frenchmen, that, instead of two chambers, they would have tried to establish three in the new con-

stitution of France: but two at least were highly necessary, as they would not only have been of service in preventing intemperate decisions and indigested decrees, but in precluding in a great measure, if not altogether, the necessity of the king's having recourse to his veto.

Perhaps this proposal of the two chambers might have been carried, had it not met with strong opposition from a quarter where it was least expected; for many of the nobles themselves were against an upper chamber: and for various reasons, arising, as was suspected, from their different situations and views. From the superabundant noblesse of France, only a small portion could be chosen to form an upper chamber. Many of those who saw but little probability of their being of the number, could not bear that others, whom they considered on a level with, or perhaps inferior, to themselves, but who had a better chance of being placed in the upper chamber, should obtain that advantage over them; and therefore were against the measure. Some imagined that the forty-seven members who had first joined the tiers-etat would be first promoted; and it filled them with indignation to think that men whom they looked on as little better than traitors, many of them of the lowest class of noblesse, should, as a reward for betraying its cause, be placed at the head of the order. It is also believed, that the proposal of two chambers was opposed by some of the higher orders who were enemies to the revolution in any form, and thought that such a regulation would give stability to it, and prevent that discord, precipitancy, and anarchy, of which they saw the seeds in the present assembly, and from which they augured its speedy overthrow, and the restoration of a government more to their taste.

The project of the two chambers being disliked by the public in general, and considered by many of the deputies of the third order as a plan calculated for raising a favoured portion of the noblesse above the other members of the national assembly, and forming a new and more important species of peerage; and as it was not supported by the

whole body of the noblesse themselves, and opposed by several of them, it is not surprising that the motion was lost by a great majority.

The notion that an upper chamber, by creating a more important species of aristocracy though less numerous than what existed formerly in France, would have proved destructive to freedom, seems erroneous; but the objection might have been easily obviated, by electing the upper chamber not from the noblesse alone, but promiscuously from the general body of deputies without regard to birth; to be continued, according to M. Mounier's proposal, only for seven years, or some other limited term; to consist of not more than a fourth or fifth of the general assembly of representatives, and of members of a more advanced age than was requisite for being chosen of the lower assembly. This, or some contrivance to produce delay and re-consideration, was assuredly highly requisite in a numerous assembly of *Frenchmen*, most of them inexperienced in political science, novices in the business of legislation, impetuous, and enthusiastic. To the want of some salutary check of this nature much of the mischief and misery that has befallen France, and some perhaps of what through her means has befallen her neighbours, may be ascribed. Another circumstance from which she has greatly suffered, has been the permitting the people in the galleries of the national assembly to manifest their approbation or disapprobation of the speakers in the noisy and insulting manner they sometimes do.

At the first assembling of the states-general, the curiosity of the public to hear the debates was prodigious; and the tiers-etat, who of themselves first formed the national assembly, soon perceived the advantage which resulted to them from the presence of a numerous auditory in the galleries. They were not always sure of having the argument, but they were absolutely certain of having the galleries on their side.

At the beginning the audience ventured to *applaud* only; and as many members spoke more for the purpose of

drawing a little applause than any other, the presence of strangers was rather agreeable than otherwise. But the strangers soon took the liberty of giving the most noisy proofs of their disapprobation as well as of their satisfaction. This was complained of by several members, but never remedied; and it was assumed as a right which belonged to the public, that as many of the people as the galleries could contain might always sit there. This right was supported by several of the deputies, and still more strenuously by the people themselves.

While the national assembly remained at Versailles, the audience was not able fully to establish these claims. It was not until sometime after the assembly was removed to the capital that they were exercised in their utmost latitude. Then indeed the audience became the arbiters of praise and censure: and the galleries of the national assembly were considered as the *nation*, as much as the pit at a London playhouse is considered as the *town*. The performers at both *theatres* are no doubt much at the mercy of the audience—with this difference, however, that although what the British actor pronounces is liable to be damned, yet he himself is in no danger of being abused and insulted by the mob when he appears in the streets, as often happened to the unpopular orators of the national assembly.

In the progress of improvement, the French audience were not left to their own unbiassed judgment, but instructed what kind of doctrine they were to applaud, and what they were to condemn.

As a matter of curiosity, it may not be improper to give some account of a manœuvre which was of so much importance in the revolution, and which I received from those who were fully acquainted with the manner in which the galleries were disciplined, at the period when that kind of tactic was brought to the greatest perfection; and that there may be no need of returning to the subject, I shall insert it here, though not the precise part of this narrative in which, according to method, it should be placed.

The galleries of the national assembly being open to people of every description, and filled by the first comers, it will be readily believed that, in a city such as Paris, nine-tenths of the audience were incapable of understanding the debates. Those parts of the speeches, therefore, which they most admired, and at which they thundered their loudest peals of applause, were not precisely what Longinus or Mr. Burke would have selected as examples of the sublime or beautiful. Every speaker, who had not the misfortune of being thought a royalist, who had a tolerably strong voice, who interspersed his discourse with abuse of aristocrates, emigrants, and sovereign princes; who made frequent allusion to the sovereignty of the people; and who, no matter how they were introduced, often pronounced with emphasis the words *La Nation*, *Liberté*, and *Egalité*, was certain of the applause of the galleries.

Certain deputies of the court party having remarked the efficacy of these words, sometimes had the address to intermingle them so successfully with their harangues, as to draw loud applause from those who, if they had comprehended the tendency of the reasoning, would have hissed them without mercy.

As the audience were so apt to be misled by their *ears*, it was thought proper to engage their *eyes* as an auxiliary to their understanding; and men were employed to throw out signals indicating whom and when they should applaud or censure.

A member of the assembly was sometimes employed to make those signals, which were understood by only one or two persons in the galleries, who by a similar mode communicated their import to others.

The usual signals were the handkerchief hanging half out of the pocket, sometimes out of the right, sometimes out of the left—the hat held in the hand in a particular manner, or with the national cockade uppermost—rubbing the eyes, or the nose, or the ear. All these had their particular meanings, with a variety of other signs,

which may be easily conceived; each of which denoted the nature of the explosion required, whether for approbation or disapprobation.

To secure the majority it was necessary to have about a hundred and fifty persons in each of the two galleries. There were also one leader and five subalterns in each gallery. The leaders only were acquainted with the signal from the hall. This they immediately communicated by a different one to the ten subalterns, who directly began their marks of applause or censure, in which they were followed by all the mercenaries whom they had previously engaged; and their loud clappings generally excited those of all the people in the galleries.

The common mercenaries were acquainted with the subalterns only, and precisely followed their example, whether they clapped or hooted. It was left to the subalterns to engage their followers; but they were often unacquainted with each other, and in confidential correspondence only with the leader, who informed them previous to every sitting of the signals they were to follow. The two leaders were not always known to each other, and both were entirely unacquainted with those who originally employed the person who gave signals from the hall.

The wages of the common followers were from forty sols to three livres each sitting. The subalterns were paid at the rate of ten livres, and the leader at that of fifty.

When an important question was to be debated, the galleries were always in the pay of one party or the other; and sometimes each party had the usual number of their mercenaries on duty there; which never failed to occasion a great deal of noise, and a violent contest between the applauders and the hooters.

It sometimes happened also, that a number of the common hirelings deceived the subalterns, and took money from those of both parties; in which case neither was well served; all was confusion and doubt, and the real

sentiments of the *Peuple Souverain* seemed as ambiguous as the will of the gods announced by the oracle of Delphos.

From this account a pretty just estimate may be made of the value of the applause or censure of that portion of the sovereign people who were usually seated in the galleries of the national assembly after it was removed to the capital, and which continued to be one of the most powerful engines of the revolution until the time that Robespierre established the guillotine in lieu of all the rest.

At the period, however, of the insurrection which obliged the assembly to leave Versailles, Robespierre was little known, and of too small importance in the party with whom he acted to have his opinion much regarded; but I have been told that, from the time that the states-general assumed the name of national assembly, he often insisted on the advantages which would be derived from the assembly's being removed to the capital. Whatever advantage the popular party derived from the support of the galleries at Versailles, it was easy to foresee it would be enjoyed in a much greater degree at Paris. Certain deputies, therefore, formed the resolution to seize the first pretext that should present itself for removing the assembly to that city. An incident of an extraordinary nature did present itself, which served them for the pretext they wished, and which others attempted to turn to more heinous purposes.

The incident alluded to was a feast given by the gardes-du-corps, which occasioned the march of the Parisian populace to Versailles. Those who wish to excuse or palliate that shameful expedition, assert, that previous to the feast given by the body guards, which they admit to have been its immediate cause, there had been a general and well-founded suspicion of a plan to carry the king and royal family to Metz, where they were to be joined by many of the nobility and members of the parliaments, who expected that numbers of the people would flock to the royal

standard as soon as it was erected, and declare against the national assembly; that this scheme was to be aided and supported by certain powers on the continent, with a view to excite a civil war, occasion the dismemberment of France, and avenge the cause of kings, who had been insulted by the restrictions which the subjects of Lewis XVI had put on his power. The same persons insisted that the king shewed the greatest reluctance to the wishes of the nation; that he had delayed giving his sanction to the decrees of the 4th of August till the 16th of September; and then, instead of an absolute assent, he had sent a commentary on the decrees, accompanied with a conditional assent only; the full sanction not having been obtained till the 20th of the same month, after several very urgent addresses from the assembly: that he shewed the same aversion to the declaration of the bill of rights and first articles of the constitution, and postponed his acceptance of them till the arrival of the multitude at Versailles on the 6th of October, and until the carriages which were prepared for his escape were stopped by the national guards at Versailles. And, giving every circumstance the worst interpretation, they insisted, that when, on the failure of a loan proposed by M. Necker, the king sacrificed his jewels and plate to the public necessities, this was done merely with a view to blind the people to the preparations making for his escape, and because he was fully sensible that he could not have carried them with him, and of course that they would have been all confiscated.

That the king would have been very well pleased to have been safely at Metz with his family, seems highly probable; but as no proof has hitherto appeared of his having made arrangements to fly to that place at this time, all these assertions are mere conjectures.

The count d'Estaing, who had the command of the national guards of Versailles, having previously consulted the municipality, and represented the necessity of protecting the national assembly and the person of the king from any attempt against them, required of the minister

that a thousand troops of the line might be quartered in Versailles for that purpose.

This, like all the rest, was by some construed unfavourably, and imputed to a design of assisting, and not preventing, the escape of the king; especially as the national assembly had not been consulted with regard to the propriety or necessity of the measure. However that may be, the regiment of Flanders, consisting of a thousand men, *were* ordered to Versailles. When they arrived, the officers were invited, with those of the national guards, to an entertainment by the gardes-du-corps. The entertainment was given in the opera-house belonging to the palace. The guests amounted to the number of 240, and all the boxes were full of spectators. Towards the end of the entertainment the king and queen had the curiosity to enter the hall, the queen leading the young dauphin, and attended by several ladies and gentlemen of the court. This unexpected visit to a company, whose hearts were already elated with gaiety and warmed with wine, could not fail to rouse the spirit of loyalty. The healths of the royal family were drank with acclamations of joy. After walking through the hall, the royal party retired; the music struck up a favourite loyal tune, which was accompanied by the voices of the guests. The gates of the hall were thrown open for the grenadiers of the two corps, who, having drank the healths of the royal family, hurried with jovial enthusiasm to pass the night in dancing beneath the windows of the palace. Some white cockades were distributed among them by the ladies of the court.

This scene passed on the 1st of October 1789. It was soon after circulated, and has been since published, that the entertainment was given and all the incidents arranged by certain persons of the court, who were at the expense of the whole for the purpose of awakening the loyalty of the inhabitants of Versailles, attaching the regiment of Flanders and the national guards to the king and queen, prejudicing them against the national assembly,

favouring a plan already formed for the king's escape to Metz, and effecting a counter-revolution; and as these things were arranged at a time when the king pretended to co-operate with the assembly in establishing a new constitution, to which he expressed general good-will, although he was scrupulous respecting particular articles, and wished to have them explained before he would give them his sanction, they are enumerated as proofs of the king's falsehood and hypocrisy. But all this is founded on mere conjecture and assertion, since no proof is brought that the entertainment was at the expense of the persons alluded to, or for the purposes above mentioned; and if both were proved, it would still remain to be proved that the king was acquainted with, and had agreed to, the measures. It is very certain, indeed, that some persons of great influence who had emigrated were continually scheming plans of counter-revolution, and using every means in their power to prompt him to withdraw from the kingdom; being convinced that his presence with them would greatly facilitate the object they had constantly in view. They feared nothing so much as that the king should be gained over to the side of the people, and agree to a constitution in which a great part, perhaps as much as he wished, of his own authority would be secured and confirmed, while they would remain deprived of their privileges and excluded from France for ever. But it is equally certain, that some of the most respectable members of the assembly had taken great pains to inspire the king with a desire of becoming, and a pride in being thought, the restorer of liberty to France. They had represented the necessity of his abstaining from all communication with those who had emigrated from the kingdom; as any appearance of that would tend to alienate the hearts of his subjects: and, above all, they had pointed out the measure of withdrawing from France as pregnant with the most fatal consequences to himself and to his country. It is even said, that the example of James II of England was mentioned as a warning to him by some, who assert-

ed that the posterity of that prince might have been placed on the throne, had he possessed the firmness to have remained at all risks in the island. Finally, the king was conjured to rely on the attachment and love of his own subjects, rather than on the humiliating protection and interested aid of foreign powers; for, even if they should accomplish the re-establishment of his family, there was much reason to fear it would be at the severe expense of his kingdom.

Upon the whole, there is reason to believe that the king had not formed any design at this time of withdrawing; that the feast was given at the sole expense of the gardes-du-corps, with no other view than to entertain the guests who were invited; and that the incidents which gave offence and created suspicion were accidental; for, however imprudent some of the scenes may be thought, they were no way inconsistent with the character of the actors.

On the 2d of October, M. Mounier, as president, presented certain articles of the constitution agreed on by the assembly to the king for his acceptance. The king answered, that he would in due time make his intentions respecting those articles known. Some people imagined, that his majesty was induced to give this answer by the marks of attachment to his person, and the expressions of loyalty that had passed at the entertainment of the preceding night; and that he meant to postpone his acceptance till he should effect his escape. The assembly were not pleased with the answer. Whatever were the king's motives, the news of his having delayed to sanction the articles occasioned still more displeasure at Paris. His enemies represented this as a determined refusal; and they resolved to spirit up the people to insurrection.

With this view, the circumstances of the entertainment at the opera-house were misrepresented in the manner most likely to alarm the friends of liberty, and to enrage the populace. It was repeated, ' that the feast had been given for the purpose of seducing the national guards from the cause of freedom; that the general topic of con-

versation among the guests was the unhappy condition of the royal family, and how meritorious it would be to free them from it; that songs breathing the same sentiment had been sung; that the queen, when she walked through the hall with the dauphin in her arms, had recommended him to the soldiers in terms injurious to the people. It was said that the national cockade, the emblem of liberty, had been trodden under foot; that a great number of supernumerary officers and chevaliers of St. Louis were assembled at Versailles; and that mercenary soldiers had been brought to that city of late, and more were expected, with a design to controul the assembly, perhaps to massacre the members; and that measures had been already used, and were still continued by the court, to intercept the provisions destined for the capital.'

Those misrepresentations were not thought sufficient to excite the mob to the point in view. By means of considerable sums distributed among the agents of insurrection, of whom there were abundance at this time in Paris, a numerous band of men, armed with pikes and other weapons, assembled on the morning of the 5th of October in the square of the Hotel de Ville. It was not difficult for the agents above mentioned to collect a multitude of desperate persons; because there really was a great scarcity of provisions. Many poor families, particularly in the suburbs, were suffering the pangs of hunger, and all were terrified with the idea of impending famine. The committee appointed for supplying the city with provisions were also accused of negligence; and the multitude insisted on entering into the town-house to remonstrate with them. They were faintly opposed by the national guards, who soon gave way, saying they would not fight against poor people who demanded only bread.

That this insurrection might have the less appearance of a premeditated plan, and be the less resisted at the beginning, it had been thought proper to employ women, and persons in female garb. To their noisy requisitions

for bread the committee declared that all possible means were using to procure it; but that they had met with unexpected difficulties. A cry was immediately heard, that those difficulties originated at the court, and that they would go to Versailles and demand redress from the king. This proposal met with universal approbation; and soon after a man, known by the name of Maillard, offered himself as their leader. As this person had distinguished himself at the taking of the Bastile, and was known to them all, he was immediately chosen to that office *par acclamation;* and the outcry was resumed of marching to Versailles. Maillard led his band of amazons through the unresisting national guards who filled the square, conducted them by beat of drum to the plain called the Elysian Fields, where they mustered near five thousand persons, of whom four-fifths were women, or dressed like women. Many of those who were in men's dress were disguised with long beards, or in some other fantastical manner. Having previously broken into some magazines, they were all armed; and they stopped as many coaches as were necessary to furnish horses for dragging some pieces of cannon, a poissarde being mounted on each horse, and a couple on each cannon, which followed the main body in their march to Versailles. This Maillard, who offered himself so à-propos, and was chosen so unanimously as their leader, was most probably one of the agents previously fixed upon for conducting this business, under the secret influence and at the expense of the duke of Orleans.

M. La Fayette has been censured for not having dispersed this band of insurgents, and prevented their marching to Versailles. It appears, however, that the spirit of insurrection had gained upon the national guards themselves; that they were deaf to the remonstrances of their commander, and refused to use any kind of force against women. And in a short time the clamour became universal, that the general himself should lead them to

Versailles, lay their grievances before the king, and invite him to reside at Paris.

M. La Fayette said every thing he could think of to turn them from this; and the whole of his conduct both at this time and previous to it proves his sincerity.

When a fermentation was excited sometime before this period by a very turbulent and seditious man of the name of St. Huruge, who proposed this very measure, that the king and the national assembly should be appointed to reside at Paris, it was greatly owing to the spirited behaviour of M. La Fayette, that the mob which this man had assembled was dispersed, and St. Huruge himself, with several other agitators, was seized and sent to prison; and there can be no doubt that the present insurrection would have had a similar termination, if the national guards had been equally obedient to M. La Fayette on this occasion as on the former. Besides, the ill terms on which M. La Fayette was with the duke of Orleans is sufficient of itself to clear him of this accusation. No two men were less likely to be in intimacy with each other. Their characters were directly opposite: M. La Fayette is described by those who have known him long and intimately, as indefatigable in the pursuit of renown, disinterested, brave, and generous—qualities never attributed to the character of the duke of Orleans.

Some are so irritated by the losses they have sustained, others by the consequences they dread from the French revolution, that they view with equal enmity those men who from the most laudable motives joined in the measures for obtaining a free constitution for France, and those who rendered these measures abortive, by involving the country in anarchy and drenching it in blood. With equal discernment might Hampden be confounded with Cromwell, or Russell or Sydney with Titus Oates.

To charge the dukes of Rochefoucault and Liancourt, Mess. de Lally-Tolendal, Mounier, Clermont-Tonnerre, Malouet, and many others, whose views were to reform the abuses of an arbitrary government, and establish a li-

mited monarchy, as in any respect accessaries to the bloody scenes which have been acted in the course of this revolution, is in the highest degree absurd. If such reasoning were admitted, Luther would be proved to be the author of the massacre of St Bartholomew; because, unless he had attempted to detect the abuses of popery, and brought about the reformation, there would have been no Protestants to massacre.

The national guards assembled before the town-house were so determined on this expedition to Versailles, and so irritated at La Fayette's persevering endeavours to dissuade them, that a large body of them declared that they would no longer have him for their commander, and actually proposed to M. Dogni, intendant des postes and commander of the battalion of St. Eustache, to accept the chief command instead of La Fayette, and to lead them to Versailles, declaring that they would follow his orders in all respects. He, however, positively refused. Seeing that at all events they were decided on going, M. La Fayette at length said, that if the municipality would give him an order for that purpose, he would go at the head of the national guards to communicate to the king the distresses of the capital, and the grievances of which they complained.

Having obtained the order, he set out with a body of 20,000 men for Versailles, four or five hours after the motley band above described had taken the same route.

Whoever were the first movers of this insurrection, they had given different reasons for the necessity of it, adapted to the different prejudices and dispositions of the persons they wished to excite.

The national militia complained of the indignity offered to the three-coloured cockade by the gardes-du-corps at the famous banquet, for which, they said, these body-guards deserved death.

The old French guards, who were incorporated with the national guards, were provoked at not having been allowed to guard the person of the king. They said that

this was a clear proof that he intended to escape out of the kingdom; and they were instructed to call for his being removed to Paris.

Some exclaimed against his having delayed to sanction the decrees of the national assembly, and said they ought to march to Versailles, on purpose to let him know that the people were impatient for that measure.

The poissardes cried out against the scarcity of bread; and as they proceeded to Versailles, they often execrated the queen as the sole cause of the scarcity. 'I never heard,' said a garde-à-cheval as he passed them, 'that the queen devoured more bread than another woman.' 'C'est égal,' answered one of these furies: 'Tu vas à Versailles; dis à la reine que nous y serons pour lui couper le cou.'

The king had gone that morning to hunt the stag. He was informed, while in the midst of the chase, that there had been great disorders in Paris, in consequence of which a multitude of armed people, many of them in women's dress, were marching to Versailles. His majesty immediately left the field, and returned to the palace. The captain of his guards asked if he had any orders to give to him. The king answered, laughing, *Eh quoi, pour des femmes! vous vous moquez.*

Such accounts came afterwards, however, of their numbers, of their rage, and of the threatening language which they held on their march, that this expedition began to be considered as a very serious business by those near the person of the king. It was even proposed in the council, that the royal family should be removed; but that proposition being over-ruled, the queen was informed, that as the fury and malice of the insurgents were peculiarly pointed against her, it would be highly proper for her to withdraw, for some time at least, from Versailles: to which, with a firmness which never forsook her on the most trying occasions, she answered, 'I am determined never to forsake my husband: if the Parisians are bent on murdering me, I will die at the feet of the king.'

CHAPTER XV.

Daring Conduct of Mirabeau—The Rabble arrive at Versailles—A Deputation of Poissardes accompany that of the National Assembly to the King—He gives a conciliatory Answer to the former, and the same Night assents to the Decrees of the Assembly—M. La Fayette, with the Parisian Army, arrives at Midnight—The Court, the Deputies, and M. La Fayette, retire to Rest—The Palace unexpectedly attacked in the Morning—Various Scenes of Horror—Insolence of the Rabble—Magnanimous Behaviour of the Queen—The Royal Family carried to Paris—Reception there.

The king having postponed his assent to the decrees, which had passed in the national assembly, and had been presented to him by M. Mounier their president, the assembly became more and more impatient on account of this delay. Nothing is a surer indication of weakness, in every sense of the word, than betraying symptoms of hesitation and unwillingness to do what is exacted of us, and what it is clear we must do after all. The hesitation of the court in the present instance injured their cause in various ways. It disposed the public to give credit to those who were continually asserting, that the king considered his interest as opposite to that of the people; and it provoked some of the deputies to a petulance of language inconsistent with the respect due to the king.—'Il me semble,' said Mirabeau, 'qu'on pourroit faire au roi une addresse, dans laquelle on lui parleroit avec cette franchise et cette vérité, qu'un fou de Philippe mettoit dans ces paroles triviales: *Que ferois-tu, Philippe, si tout le monde disoit* non *quand tu dis* oui?'*

In the course of the same debate, Petion declaimed against the transactions at the entertainment of the life-

* It appears to me, that in an address to the king it would not be improper to speak with the same frankness and truth that the court fool of Philip conveyed in this sentence.—'What would you do, Philip, if all the world said No when you said Yes?'

guards, which was the first time that any notice had been taken of it in the assembly; and he asserted, that many things had occurred at that entertainment of a highly criminal nature: on which M. Monspay observed, that vague insinuations ought not to be regarded; that Petion was therefore bound to mention the names of the guilty persons, reduce his accusation to writing, and to sign it. To this Petion made no answer; but it was generally understood that the queen and the duke de Guiche, colonel of the life-guards, were the persons whom he had chiefly in view.

As Petion seemed to shrink from this challenge, Mirabeau rose and said,—'Je commence par déclarer que je regarde comme souverainement impolitique la dénonciation qui vient d'être provoquée: cependant, si on persiste à la demander, je suis prêt, moi, à fournir tous les détails et à les signer; mais auparavant, je demande que cette assemblée déclare que la personne du roi est *seule* inviolable; et que tous les autres individus de l'etat, quels qu'ils soient, sont également sujets et responsables devant la loi.'*

At the earnest request of M. Mounier the president, M. Monspay withdrew his motion, by which the agitation of a question was prevented which might have had the most fatal consequences. Mirabeau then moved, that the president, at the head of a deputation, should wait on the king with an expostulatory address, requesting him to give a *pure* and *simple* sanction to the articles of the declaration of rights and the constitution which had been already presented to him; for the reply which the king had made was rather a comment on the articles than an explicit answer. Robespierre said, that so far from being an acceptance it was a censure.

* I begin by declaring, that I consider the defiance which has been made as highly imprudent; but, if it is insisted on, I am ready to give a circumstantial account of the whole, and to sign it; but previously I expect that this assembly shall declare that the person of the king *alone* is inviolable; and that all the other individuals in the state, whosoever they may be, are subject and responsible to law.

The deputation was immediately decreed; but before the members were appointed, the first tumultuous band that had left Paris, conducted by Maillard, arrived at Versailles. A detachment of the most furious of the poissardes belonging to it marched directly to the national assembly, and were on the point of forcing the guards at the gate, when the assembly *prudently* decreed, that they should be admitted.

Maillard gave a strong proof of the influence he had over those women. He prevailed on them to permit him to *speak* for them, and to restrain their tongues while he spoke. He said 'they had come to demand bread, of which there was a great scarcity at Paris, and this scarcity artificially brought on by traitors. He added, that they had likewise come to punish the gardes-du-corps, who had offered an affront to the patriotic cockade; that it was criminal to wear any other; and that he would shew the assembly how both the black cockades and those who wore them ought to be treated.' He then took a cockade of that colour, and tore it in pieces with every mark of indignation. His speech and action having excited some murmurs, 'What,' said he, 'are we not all brethren?' The president observed, that, notwithstanding their being all brethren, still it was unlawful to tear people in pieces merely for wearing cockades of a wrong colour.

By this time the patience of the women was quite exhausted. They could keep silence no longer; but as they began their remonstrances all together, it was a considerable time before it could be distinguished that the grievance they chiefly insisted on was the scarcity of bread.

The president declared, that the assembly were just going to deliberate on the speediest means of procuring it, and added that the ladies might withdraw.

Instead of taking this hint, however, the ladies seated themselves without ceremony on the benches with the deputies. They did not listen to the debates with the same silence which they had preserved during Maillard's harangue; but took a degree of interest in them which must

have been embarrassing to all, and peculiarly so to the orators whose discourse they disapproved.—'Parle donc, député!' they called to one; 'Tais-toi, député;' to another. Sometimes, instead of député, they addressed the speakers whom they did not relish by appellations too vile to be mentioned.

In consequence of a decree which had passed immediately before the arrival of the poissardes, M. Mounier and fifteen deputies went out of the hall. They were again to address the king to give a simple assent, unclogged with conditions, to the articles which had been presented to him on the 2d. As soon as the poissardes understood this, a number of them insisted on accompanying the president to the king. M. Mounier, with some difficulty, prevailed on them to limit the number to six.

The deputation of the national assembly, with their new associates, walked under a heavy shower of rain between two rows of an intermingled multitude of armed men and women, from the hall of the assembly to the palace.

When they arrived at the gate, a band of poissardes who followed, instead of adhering to the treaty, insisted that *twelve* of their number should enter the king's apartment with the president. This new requisition was complied with, as it must have been had they insisted upon a hundred.

The president being introduced, with the deputation from the assembly, and the twelve representatives of the poissarde army, made an affecting discourse to the king on the deplorable scarcity of provisions, and the confusion resulting from it in the capital. His majesty replied in the same style, lamenting the distresses of the poor in such pathetic terms as charmed the poissardes; and they withdrew in full confidence that his majesty would do all in his power to remedy the evil of which they complained. But when they gave an account of this to their constituents without, they were accused of having been corrupted by the courtiers, threatened with the lantern, and

ordered to return and obtain a written order from the king, for bringing supplies of grain from various quarters, and for removing all the obstacles which, they asserted, had been artificially created to starve the poor, and prevent Paris from being supplied with provisions. On their return, M. de St. Priest is said to have addressed them in these terms.—'Autrefois vous n'aviez qu'un roi, et vous ne manquiez pas de pain; aujourd'hui, que vous avez douze cents rois, c'est à eux qu'il faut en demander.'*

M. de St. Priest certainly meant to serve the king, by reminding the people that there was not such a scarcity of provisions under a single king as under a great many: but to those who are in want of daily bread it is dangerous to say any thing which conveys the idea that kings and scarcity are at all connected; because they may come to draw the conclusion which the French populace were soon after taught, namely, that kings were great devourers of poor people's provisions; and that, as the people were better provided under one king than under many, they would fare still better if they had no king at all to provide for.

When Mirabeau accused M. St. Priest afterwards in the assembly on account of this speech, he denied that he had ever made it. But, however that may be, M. de St. Priest delivered to the poissardes a paper signed by the king to the effect required, which satisfied those who sent them. Although nothing seems more absurd than to suppose that any measures had been taken by the king or his ministers to occasion an artificial famine, or to prevent the capital from being supplied with provisions, yet such assertions were often made by the seditious, and as often believed by the ignorant.

During those transactions the rabble before the outer gates of the palace, endeavouring to force themselves into the great court, were repulsed by the gardes-du-corps;

* Formerly you had only one king, and you were in no want of bread; at present, when you have twelve hundred kings, you must demand it from them.

and one of them, who happened to be an inhabitant of Versailles, being wounded, the national guards of that town fired on the body guards; and the most fatal consequences seemed on the point of taking place, but were fortunately prevented before any person was killed on either side.

M. Mounier had addressed the king on the scarcity of provisions only, while the poissardes remained; but when they were withdrawn, he presented the articles of the constitution for the king's acceptance: but so great was his reluctance, that he allowed M. Mounier to remain in attendance from six in the evening till near ten, being, during all this interval, balancing whether he should sanction them in the manner required by the assembly, or not; and then ordering the president into his presence, he, with a very bad grace, gave his simple assent, as was exacted from the beginning.

Although there was an elegance and dignity in the manners of Charles I of Great Britain, of which those of Lewis XVI were entirely devoid; and although their characters were different in many other respects, yet the conduct of the latter on the present occasion has a striking resemblance to that of the former when the *petition of right* was presented to him by the commons. After using various methods to turn the commons from their intention, which only confirmed them more steadily in it, Charles strove to elude the petition by vague and indeterminate answers, instead of gracefully complying with it or courageously rejecting it at once; and, after sundry attempts at evasion, he was at last reduced to answer the petition in the usual concise and clear form by which a bill is confirmed.

M. Mounier having returned to the hall, and most of the deputies being tired with so long and so turbulent a sitting, retired to their apartments. They were soon disturbed, however, and recalled to the assembly, on the arrival of M. La Fayette and the Parisian army.

Whatever alarm an expedition, the object of which

they knew not, might occasion in the breast of the deputies, it was soon removed by the conduct of M. La Fayette, who, after having waited on the king, presented himself to the national assembly with every appearance of respect and submission. He lamented to M. Mounier the disorders and jealousies which had obliged him to march at the head of the national guards to Versailles; expressing at the same time his hope and belief, that an apology from the gardes-du-corps, and their adoption of the national cockade, would produce an oblivion of the past, and a good understanding in future.

It was midnight when the Parisian army arrived at Versailles. The weather was cold, and it continued to rain with violence. The soldiers took refuge in taverns, coffeehouses, under porticos, wherever they could rest, and find shelter. Refreshments were distributed among them, and an appearance of good humour inspired hopes that all danger of tumult was over for that night at least.

When M. La Fayette perceived this, he returned to the palace, and gave such an account of this apparent tranquillity, that the king and queen retired to rest. Having appointed different guards, and placed sentinels where he judged it necessary, M. La Fayette again entered the national assembly, and gave M. Mounier the same assurances that he had given the king. Notwithstanding the great need that the president of the assembly, after so very distressing a sitting of eighteen hours, must have had of repose, he told M. La Fayette, that if he had any fear of tumults in the night, he was ready to remain in the hall, and to persuade his brother deputies to do the same, that they might unite their efforts with his for the preservation of peace.

La Fayette answered, that, having already given the necessary directions, he was so convinced of the general pacific disposition, that he was himself going to take a few hours rest.

It has been asserted by M. La Fayette's enemies, that he *affected* to retire to rest, knowing that the palace was

to be attacked, that he might not be thought to have any part in the horrid attempt which took place during his absence. But whatever blame he may be charged with for not taking more effectual means for guarding the palace, or for giving way to the desire of rest at such a period, the excessive fatigues both of mind and body which he had undergone, precludes the suspicion of affectation; and his conduct from the moment he was awaked, as well as his general behaviour and character through life, must satisfy the candid and impartial, that the accusation is unjust, and that he had not the least notion when he retired that the castle would be attacked.

Notwithstanding some scenes of confusion which no activity could prevent, the manner in which he suppressed the great insurrection in the camp de Mars on the 17th of the following July, and the state of tranquillity in which Paris was kept during the whole time that M. La Fayette had the command of the national guards, compared with the horrid scenes that were acted there after it was intrusted to others, afford reason to believe that it would have been fortunate for the royal family, and for France, that he had been continued in that command; in which case the insurrection of the 10th of August would not have happened; or, if it had, the issue would probably have been different, and the massacres in September would certainly have been prevented.

M. La Fayette retired to rest about three or four in the morning; and, at about six, different groups of the rabble of both sexes, who had left Paris the preceding day, and had been spending the night in drinking, met near the palace. It was evident that M. La Fayette's orders were ill obeyed. The external courts were unguarded in several places. It was proposed by some of this united band of ruffians to attack the gardes-du-corps, who were few in number. This was no sooner proposed than executed. Without meeting with any resistance from the national militia of Versailles, those wretches rushed furiously across the courts, crying, ' Tuez les gardes-du-

corps, point de quartier.' Two of those gallant men were killed, others wounded and driven within the palace. One party of the assailants, with horrid threats and imprecations, attempted to force their way into the apartments of the queen. M. de Miomandre, having given the alarm to those in the inner chamber that the queen's life was in danger, opposed the entrance of the murderers with heroic gallantry, until he fell covered with honourable wounds.

Two wretches, dressed like poissardes and armed with pikes, stepping over his body, rushed into the queen's bedchamber. They expressed redoubled rage on finding that she had escaped.

The terrified princess had run half naked into the king's chamber. He on his part had at the first alarm hastened to her's by another passage; and some of the attendants, anxious for the life of the dauphin, had run and fetched him from the children's apartment; and when the king returned to his own chamber, he found the young prince in the arms of his mother.

The marquis de La Fayette, whose lodgings were in the town at some distance from the palace, as soon as he was informed that it was attacked, started from his bed, mounted his horse, and having summoned a company of grenadiers, many of whom had formerly belonged to the gardes Françoises, and were now incorporated with the national troops, conjured them to accompany him to the palace, and save the royal family from assassination, and the French name from lasting infamy. They arrived as the ruffians were attempting to force the king's apartment.

The first thought that occurred to the humane mind of the king, after finding his own family protected, was to save the body guards, who were pursued and searched for with sanguinary fury by the assassins. He recommended them in the most earnest terms to M. La Fayette and his grenadiers. Fifteen of the gardes-du-corps, who had opposed the first entrance of the mob into the palace,

having been surrounded and overpowered, were still in the hands of those savages, who were preparing to put them to death at the bottom of the grand stair-case. 'Grenadiers,' cried La Fayette to his soldiers, 'souffrirez-vous donc que de braves gens soient ainsi lâchement assassinés?' *

The gardes-du-corps, under the protection of the grenadiers, were immediately conducted into the palace, while La Fayette endeavoured to sooth and mollify the populace.

Eight other gentlemen of the gardes-du-corps, mostly old officers, having been driven from the palace, were concealed in one room in the town. A party of the most profligate of the Paris mob were informed where they were, seized them, and conducted them back on purpose to put them to death directly under the king's windows; in which avowed design they were not opposed by the militia of Versailles. One of the prisoners, an old officer with grey hairs, addressing the multitude, said,—'Nôtre vie est entre vos mains; vous pouvez nous égorger; mais vous ne l'abregérez que de quelques instans; et nous ne mourrons pas deshonorés.' †

An officer of the Parisian national guards, struck with this short address, and the undaunted military looks of the prisoners, burst through the crowd, threw his arms around the venerable officer's neck, and cried,—'Non, nous n'égorgerons pas de braves gens comme vous.' ‡

Those who hitherto had been passive spectators, and would have continued so to the consummation of the intended wickedness, affected by the words, and fired by the example of the Parisian officer, immediately joined their efforts to his, and saved the gentlemen from the swords of those murderers.

* Grenadiers, will you then suffer those brave men to be assassinated in that cowardly manner.

† Our lives are in your power; you may murder us; but that will abridge our lives but a short time; and we shall not die dishonoured.

‡ No, we will not put to death brave men like you.

As soon as M Mounier heard of these transactions, he hastened to the national assembly, and made a proposal, which was supported by other deputies, that the national assembly should be immediately transferred to the grand saloon of the palace, that they might at once assist his majesty with their advice, and contribute to his protection at such an alarming crisis. But Mirabeau exclaimed,—'Je m'y oppose; il n'est pas de nôtre dignité, il n'est pas même sage, de déserter nôtre poste, au moment où des dangers *imaginaires* ou réels semblent menacer la chose publique.'*

At a time when all the assembly must have known that armed ruffians had assaulted the palace, murdered the guards, and forced their way into the royal apartments, to talk of dignity, and express doubts of the reality of the king's danger, required all that unshaken effrontery which Mirabeau possessed. No part of his conduct exposes him to the suspicion of being connected in some degree with the insurrection, so much as this. The most dignified conduct the assembly could have followed would have been to have adopted the generous proposal of their president.

The king's mind was greatly affected with the death of the guards who had fallen in his defence; and, notwithstanding all the assurances of M. La Fayette, while he walked through his palace accompanied and protected by the general, he was making continual inquiries respecting the gardes-du-corps; and his anxiety carried him so far at last, that he appeared at the balcony, assuring the crowd below, that they had been unjustly accused, and even interceding in their favour.

Some of the populace calling out for the queen, she appeared at the balcony with the dauphin and the princess-royal at her side.

No tyrant, giddy with the plenitude of power, ever

* It is unbecoming our dignity, it is even unwise, for us to desert our post at a moment when real or imaginary dangers seem to threaten the public.

pushed the wantonness of despotism to a more disgusting length than the wretches who filled the courts below. Instead of being moved at this mark of condescension, some of the barbarians called out, 'Point d'enfans!' No construction could be put on such an exclamation, at such a moment, but that it was thought that the queen had brought the children as a protection to herself, and that the wretches intended to fire at her when they were removed. It was most natural for the queen herself to think so, because she had been frequently told that their curses and threats had been particularly directed against her.

Unmoved by this reflection, she made the children withdraw, and instantly turning to the multitude she stood alone, upright, and undaunted.

Struck with admiration of her majestic appearance and intrepid behaviour, the most barbarous for a moment forgot their rancour, and joined in the repeated shouts of applause that burst from all quarters, in the midst of which the queen retired.

Sometime after the queen had disappeared, those who directed the movements of the multitude resumed the great object of this expedition. Voices were heard exclaiming, *Le Roi à Paris!* The voices multiplied every moment; and at last the cries of *A Paris! à Paris!* were universal.

The king had no choice left. It would not have been in the power of M. La Fayette himself, perhaps, to have saved the lives of the royal family, had he refused. He declared his intention, therefore, of going that very day to Paris with his family; and his intentions being notified to the crowd, by notes and cards thrown from the windows of the palace, were received by the people with their usual noisy indications of joy.

As soon as it was announced in the national assembly, that the king was disposed to go to Paris, Mirabeau said, —'Je pense que nous devons être rapprochés du monarque, pour l'accélération de nôtre ouvrage. Je demande

qu'il soit décreté, que le roi et l'assemblée nationale seront inséparables pendant la présente session.' *

This was unanimously agreed to; and it was decreed at the same time, that a deputation of one hundred members of the national assembly should accompany the king to the capital.

Of all the disagreeable circumstances which counterbalance the joys of sovereignty, and we are told there are a great many, none are more revolting to an ingenuous mind than the sacrifices which kings are thought to be under the necessity of making to policy and what are called reasons of state.

In the answer which the king made to the deputation sent to him with the above decree, are the following expressions.—' Je reçois avec une vive sensibilité les nouveaux témoignages de l'attachement de l'assemblée; le vœu de mon cœur est de ne jamais me séparer d'elle,' &c.†

After the fatigue and agonies of such a night, the royal family certainly were much in need of an interval of repose; but they were destined to undergo some very painful hours before they obtained it.

The multitude which surrounded the palace of Versailles began to manifest symptoms of ill-humour at the delay of the king's journey. Every consideration for the unfortunate family was sacrificed to the impatience of the poissardes and their savage paramours.

The royal family left Versailles a little after one o'clock, which was announced by a volley from the troops. The company of the hundred Swiss surrounded the king's coach; a troop of dragoons preceded, and another im-

* I am of opinion that we ought to be always near the person of the monarch, for the acceleration of the public business. I propose that it be decreed, that the king and the national assembly shall be inseparable during the present session.

† I have the most lively sense of this fresh testimony of the assembly's attachment; the earnest wish of my heart is never to be separated from it.

mediately followed it. The Parisian national guards had begun their march a short time before. Various bands of the poissardes were intermingled with all the different corps of this strange army—some seated in waggons, ornamented with green boughs, and white, red, and blue ribbons—some astride upon the cannon—many on horseback; generally two on the same horse, with the hats of the gardes-du-corps on their heads, the belts across their shoulders, and armed with sabres—rending the air every instant with their savage shouts and the choruses of their vile songs. In the middle of one band of those sanguinary hags, two men carried long pikes, on the points of which were the heads of the murdered gardes-du-corps.

At certain distances the whole procession was made to halt, for the purpose of firing fresh volleys, and that the soldiers might be refreshed with wine and a little rest. On those occassions the poissardes on the carriages and on horseback descended and joined hands in horrid dances around the bloody heads that were fixed on the pikes. What rendered the scene completely shocking was the presence of the gardes-du-corps who had been saved by the grenadiers, and were now marched in triumph, disarmed, and in sight of the heads of their murdered companions. These scenes of savage mirth were repeated at intervals during the journey, which lasted from a little after one till seven in the evening, about which time the royal family arrived at Paris.

The town was illuminated. The king was received with shouts and other demonstrations of joy, which, he was told, proceeded entirely from the overflowing loyalty of the inhabitants. As the procession moved to the Hotel de Ville, the exclamations of *Vive le Roi!* resounded from all sides; but the unfortunate monarch was sufficiently acquainted with the value of such exclamations. On entering the hall of the town-house, where a throne was prepared for his reception, a very dutiful speech was pronounced to him by one of the presidents of the common council. The king, no doubt, was also acquainted at this

time with the value of such dutiful speeches; and the reliance he put in the professions of loyalty which he heard was probably in exact proportion to the sincerity with which they were pronounced.

The queen was present at all this; and one remarkable proof of her presence of mind in the midst of scenes which might have disturbed even men of courage and firmness of character, was taken notice of, namely, that when the mayor was repeating to those around him what the king had said to him on his entering Paris, he happened to forget a sentence which the king had pronounced; the queen, overhearing this, instantly corrected him, and put him in mind of the omission.

CHAPTER XVI.

Reflections on French and British Loyalty—Anecdote regarding the Duke of Orleans—Reflections on his Character, and the part he took in the Revolution—On the Conduct and Views of Mirabeau—Expressions of four Persons in a Tavern at Seve—Dismal State of the Royal Family on their Arrival at the Tuilleries.

The French have been thought to possess such an affectionate and respectful attachment to their monarchs, as rendered them by much the most loyal nation in Europe. No man was more of that opinion than the author of this narrative. The events of the present dreadful revolution afford cause of suspicion that this was at no time the case in *reality* so much as it was in *appearance*.

It will be still acknowledged, however, that no people ever displayed more attachment to the person, or more zeal for the glory, of their monarchs, whether they were of worthless characters, like Henry III, or of benevolent ones, like Lewis XVI, than the French have always done, as long as the monarch has had the address or good fortune to retain his power. While the power of the prince flourishes, the loyalty of the subject shines green as the

laurel, and stands firm as a rock; but when his power is in decay, their loyalty withers with it, and shakes like the poplar leaf.

The people of England have been accused by their neighbours of possessing but a very moderate portion of loyalty; and what little they have is said to be of a very cold and phlegmatic nature. James II, however, was one of the most unpopular princes that ever sat on their throne: he provoked them to the highest degree, by perfidious designs against their liberty, and open attacks on their religion; yet when the sunshine of his prosperity was overcast with the blackest clouds of adversity; when his favourites, his relations, his very children, forsook him; and when, endeavouring to fly from the storm, he was stopped at Feversham, and brought back a prisoner to his capital; how was this ungracious king, thus overwhelmed with calamity, received by the English people? They were so much moved with compassion for his unhappy fate, so much affected with the sight of distressed royalty, that they forgot the king's misconduct by contemplating his misfortunes; the excess of his misery operated in his favour as if it had been virtue; and the dying embers of loyalty began to revive within their breasts, and to glow with more fervour than ever. This alarmed the prince of Orange; for although he could have formed no idea of such sensibility from any feelings of his own, yet the sympathy of the English nation did not escape his discernment: he began to dread that compassion for their unfortunate monarch would cool their gratitude to himself. He therefore immediately opened every door and port which could have opposed James's withdrawing from the kingdom, and made use of every art that could induce the infatuated monarch to adopt that measure. Such was the impression which the misfortunes of James made on the hearts of the inhabitants of the southern part of this island. As for those of the north, so far was the attachment of his friends there from depending on his prosperity, that their steady, though ill-placed, loyalty never was

more firm; nor were they ever more ready to shed their blood in his cause and that of his posterity, than after they were were wretched exiles abandoned by all the rest of the world.

As there is much reason to believe, that the insurrection at Paris was begun by a set of wretches hired for the purpose; and as none of the democratic party had the means of so extensive a bribery except the duke of Orleans, it is pretty generally supposed that he was the first mover of the whole; and that he acted in conjunction with Mirabeau. Whatever truth there may be in the first supposition, there is great reason to think the second is ill-founded.

Sometime previous to the month of October, a secret committee, consisting of the duke of Orleans, Messrs. Mirabeau, La Clos,* L'Abbé Sieyes, La Touche Treville, met at the village of Monrouge near Paris, and agreed on a scheme for placing the duke of Orleans in such a distinguished situation in the government, that, by the assistance of his fortune and under the influence of his name, this junto would have the command of the mob of Paris, and a decisive weight in the national assembly.

At the critical period after the taking of the Bastile, but before the king had yielded to the urgent and frequent remonstrances of the national assembly for dismissing his new ministers, and ordering the troops to withdraw from the neighbourhood of Paris, Mirabeau thought *that* a fortunate moment for the duke to obtain the situation which he wished to see him placed in.

The duke being then at Versailles, Mirabeau stated to him the alarm under which the ministers and the whole court were, on account of the uncertain state of events at Paris, the signs of defection in the troops, and other cir-

* M. La Clos was an officer of artillery, of eminence in his profession, and still more distinguished for his wit. He is author of a romance entitled 'Les Liaisons Dangereuses,' written with great spirit, but in which the profligate manners of the French are painted with a glow which offends modesty. This performance acquired to him the patronage of the duke of Orleans.

cumstances which rendered it probable that nothing he could ask would be refused; and persuaded him to go directly and demand an audience of the king, to offer his services for the restoration of the public tranquillity, and to request at the same time that he himself might be appointed *lieutenant-general of the kingdom.*

When Orleans entered the castle of Versailles, there was every appearance of alarm and confusion. Exaggerated accounts had been just received of scenes of bloodshed at Paris: the ladies of the court were crossing the apartments in tears—some recommended themselves to the protection of the officers, who were hurrying out with orders, or returning with fresh rumours of the transactions in the capital. The cabinet council was sitting, without being able to decide what measures should be adopted. The duke of Orleans waited till it broke up. The terror which appeared in every countenance, and which spread like a contagion, at length seized his own breast. It ought, no doubt, to have had a contrary effect: the confusion and dismay which he observed around him ought to have rendered him more serene, and confirmed him in his purpose: since they increased the probability that all his demands would be granted: but men under the influence of fear cannot reason. Ignorant of what the council had resolved on, dreading what they might possibly do if provoked, the duke accosted the king with a beating heart, and was quite disconcerted when the monarch demanded what his business was. Conscious guilt, and an instantaneous pang for the injuries he meditated against the person he addressed, probably added to his confusion. Afraid to utter what he had been instructed to say, and under the necessity of saying something, he asked permission to make a journey to England, in case the present disturbances should increase.

Nothing could surpass the indignation with which Mirabeau heard of the result of an affair on which he had founded some ambitious hopes; and he hardly ever mentioned the duke of Orleans but in terms full of con-

tempt. What could tempt the duke of Orleans to take any part in a revolution, where he had so much to lose and so little to gain, seems difficult to account for. His situation, in point of rank and fortune, was infinitely superior to that which any talent, quality, or claim he possessed, except that of birth, could ever have raised him to. The idea of ranking men according to their intrinsic value, and removing artificial distinctions, ought to have appeared as dreadful to him as it does to thousands all over Europe, who sicken and tremble at the thought, from consciousness that it would preclude every mark of respect that is now shewn them. A fit of childish ill-humour at the court rendered him the tool of a few men devoid of principle but endowed with talents, whom he expected to govern, and who he imagined would continue as obsequious and subordinate to him through all the mazes and confusions of a revolution as they were in times of tranquillity. He did not consider, that although the former are often the harvests of wicked men, yet it is only of wicked men of intrepidity and talents. He did not consider, that it is only in times of order that men of mediocrity retain pre-eminence, and that genius bends before it. The delusions of self-love must have strangely obscured the penetration of the duke of Orleans to hinder him from seeing this. No man in France was more interested than he was to prevent the progress of the revolution. The very name of *Egalité* ought to have sounded ominous and harsh to his ears as the croaking of ten thousand ravens; and so it would have done, had it not been for the delusive self-love already mentioned, and that thoughtless levity which belonged to his character, and seems to have run through his race.

Among those from whom he was descended, and who bore the same name, there was not one of an elevated or even of a steady character: weakness and frivolity seem to have pervaded the whole family, with the exception of one; and he, by the profligacy of his manners, dishonour-

ed a great share of good-nature, and another quality, which is not always united with good-nature, namely, a very brilliant wit. M. Egalité has been thought to have inherited all the qualities of his ancestors, without excepting a certain portion of the last.

Was it a love of popularity that allured this unhappy man into the vortex of the revolution? No man living, perhaps, ever despised public opinion more than the duke of Orleans: and he paid the usual tax imposed on that kind of contempt; for no man of his rank and riches was ever more despised by the public.

A little before the revolution, it is true, he began to alter his conduct, and give some indications of an inclination to acquire popularity. During a dearth he ordered distributions of bread to be made among the people, and relieved the inhabitants of the towns and the peasantry of his lands from certain oppressive rights to which he had a claim. This very conduct might have rendered him suspected; for we do not find those sudden changes in the characters of men in real life, that are often to be met with among the personæ dramatis. A vicious man does not become virtuous in an instant. When one of such a character, therefore, is suddenly seized with a fit of ostentatious benevolence, it may justly create a suspicion that it is for some ill purpose.

The applause, however, which the duke of Orleans received on this occasion, seemed to confirm his new taste for popularity, and encouraged him to make the famous protest for which he was for a short time exiled from court, and obliged to live on one of his estates. The resentment against the king on this account, and against the queen on account of her dislike of him, which she took no pains to conceal, was carefully kept up by men who had an interest in his continuing in opposition to the court; and those men, assisted by his own levity of character and his affectation of English manners, inspired him with a taste for politics for which he had no natural

turn, and gradually led him from one step to another into measures as contrary to his own interest as to that of the court.

The procession that was made through the streets of Paris in the preceding July of his bust, had probably contributed to render his head more giddy than usual, and more ready to follow the counsel of those who urged him to promote by his emissaries and money, the insurrection which carried the Parisian army to Versailles, for the purpose of either forcing the king to fly out of the kingdom, or of obliging him, and of course the national assembly, to reside at Paris; by which the duke expected that his own influence would be augmented, and the power of the crown reduced, so as to secure himself from the fate he had reason to expect, if it should ever recover its ancient vigour.

But that he had formed any plan for the assassination of the king is not to be credited.—1st, Because the researches made by the court of chatelet, which shewed sufficient zeal for finding matter of condemnation against him, made no such discovery. 2d, Because, to have placed the duke of Orleans on the throne, the death not only of the king and dauphin, and monsieur the king's eldest brother, was necessary, but also the proscription of the comte d'Artois, and his sons; which supposes a degree of atrocity beyond the wickedness of the duke of Orleans, wicked as he was; for although that species of profligacy which belonged to the duke of Orleans' character, makes a man liable to have every kind of wickedness readily believed of him, yet it may be unconnected with any cruelty of disposition. His voting for the king's death is given as a proof of his cruelty; but there is reason to think that he was terrified into it, and that it is only a proof of his want of courage. 3dly, Because those wretches who burst into the queen's bedchamber directed their their threats and their attempts against her, and not the king; which, on the supposition that the insurrection

had been raised with a view of placing the duke of Orleans on the throne, they would have done.

Beside, although the duke himself was a man likely to be seduced into schemes for which he had neither taste nor talents, yet he was devoid of that daring ambition which excites to hazardous crimes, *regnandi gratiâ*; for all his ideas were grovelling, and all his pleasures sensual.

On the whole, it is most probable that he was prompted to lavish his money in raising this insurrection by a few men at this time in his confidence, with a view to disconcert the measures of the court; while their grand object was to have their patron placed in some situation of great influence in the government, not for his own sake, but that through him they might obtain lucrative offices.

With respect to Mirabeau, it is evident that he did not act in concert with the duke of Orleans; and it does not appear that he had any hand in exciting the insurrection: but he certainly endeavoured to turn it to his own purposes when excited, by promoting the removal of the king and national assembly to Paris, where he expected, from the efforts of his own genius, to acquire a degree of importance superior to what he could expect from the patronage of the duke of Orleans, by rendering his influence in the national assembly, and of course his weight with the court, greater than it was while they remained at Versailles. He preferred a monarchy to a republic—but such a monarchy as should leave the king in a great measure dependent on men of talents and popularity, being convinced that he himself possessed more of both than any member of the assembly. He acted, however, sometimes in concert with men who were inclined to a republic, and whose schemes he would probably have rendered abortive if he had lived.

But, although neither the duke of Orleans nor those who had the management of him had made the assassination of the king or queen an article in this insurrection

and conspiracy, they could not be ignorant that their murder might have been the consequence. The calumnies and misrepresentations which had been circulated to excite the multitude to go to Versailles, were of a nature to have carried some of the most fanatical or most furious of the mob beyond the letter of their instructions; and there can be little doubt but that those who murdered the gardes-du-corps at the door of the queen's apartment, and forced into her bedchamber, intended her destruction; and if the king had been found with her, they would both in all probability have met with the same fate. Therefore all the guilt which belongs to men who must have foreseen the possibility of such a horrid catastrophe, and took no means to prevent it, falls upon the first movers of this insurrection; and that the murder both of the king and queen was sometimes in the thoughts of some of the wretches employed in this expedition, appears from the testimony of those who declared, that on the march to Versailles four persons, in the dress of women, having stopped to drink at a tavern at Seve, one said to the others,—'Ma foi, je ne peux me resoudre à le tuer, lui; cela n'est pas juste; mais pour elle, volontiers:' to which another was overheard to answer,—'Sauve qui peut, il faudra voir quand nous y serons.'*

The project of bringing the king to Paris had been taken up and executed in too sudden and rapid a manner to allow time for the Louvre, which had been long out of repair, to be decently fitted up for the reception of the royal family: but the contrast between the meanest lodgings in Paris and the magnificent apartments of Versailles, is not so great as that between the state of mind with which this unhappy family entered their new residence and what they had formerly been accustomed to enjoy. The queen in particular must have felt this reverse, and

* On my conscience I cannot bring myself to think of killing *him*; it would not be just; but as for *her* I have no scruple.

Let them save themselves who can; we'll see how things turn out when we get there.

all the horrors of the dreadful journey, with uncommon severity; for her temper and turn of mind had rendered her enjoyment of the *present*, undisturbed by reflection on the *past* or fear of the *future*—

> Lætus in præsens animus, quod ultra est
> Oderit curare; et amara lento
> Temperet risu.

Sufferings to her were new! Her morning and also her meridian way through life had been hitherto strewed with the softest and most fragrant rose-leaves, among which hardly one little thorn had ever accidentally fallen.

From the king's first entrance within the precincts of the Louvre, his friends had forebodings of what has happened since. The walls of the Louvre have been like the towers of Julius,

> With many a foul and midnight murder fed.

No wonder, therefore, that to the alarmed imagination of many friends of the royal family of France, treason, assassination, and other dreadful spectres seemed, in prophetic vision, to haunt that fatal building.

> Vestibulum ante ipsum ——————
> Luctus et ultrices posuêre cubilia Curæ:
> - - - - - - - - - - - - -
> - - - - - - - - - - - - -
> Terribiles visu formæ: Lethumque, Laborque:
> Tum consanguineus Lethi Sopor, et mala mentis
> Gaudia, mortiferumque adverso in limine Bellum.

Although the king had agreed to go with his family to Paris, in consequence of the request of the multitude at a time when it would have been dangerous to have refused, he did not imagine that his constant residence there was expected, or would have been exacted. On his first arrival, however, at the Hotel de Ville, he was requested to permit that assurances might be given to the people that he intended to fix his abode in the capital. To this he answered, that he had not come to *a final resolution* on that head. The unfortunate monarch soon found, that those who had brought him had come to *a final resolution*; and he found it necessary to write a letter to

the national assembly, which began in the following terms.—

'MESSIEURS,

'Les temoignages d'affection et de fidélité que j'ai recus des habitans de ma bonne ville de Paris, et les instances de la commune, me determinent à y fixer mon sejour le plus habituel,' &c.*

Nothing can be a stronger proof of the wretched state of controul under which the king was, than this letter; and it is impossible to think, without indignation, of the triumphant derision with which those expressions of partiality for his *bonne ville de Paris* were read by his enemies.

As it had been already decreed, that the national assembly and the king were inseparable during the present session, it followed of course that, if he remained at Paris, the assembly must remove there also; but some members, foreseeing the consequences, objected to this removal, and gave for their reasons that the deputies would be under the controul of the populace, and in danger of being insulted by them. This argument could have little effect however; because it was on that very account that those who had most influence with the assembly wished it to be fixed in the capital.

* The proofs of affection and fidelity that I have received from the inhabitants of my good city of Paris, and the entreaties of the municipality, have determined me to fix my most usual residence there.

CHAPTER XVII.

Some principal Members of the National Assembly retire—The Royal Family lodge in the Palace of the Tuilleries—The Duke of Orleans goes to England—Scarcity—A Baker murdered—Decrees for the Suppression of Insurrections—Robespierre opposes them—Plan for General Election every two Years—Reflections.

M. MALOUET, perceiving that the assembly would at last agree to the king's being removed to Paris, proposed, that the decree which rendered the persons of the deputies inviolable should be renewed and enforced. M. Malouet's meaning was to shew to the whole nation, that he considered the national representatives would be in more danger and less independent in the capital than where they had hitherto assembled; and he imagined that, by a renewal of the decree, and turning the eyes of the nation on the danger he dreaded, he would render it less than it would otherwise be.

Mirabeau opposed this as unnecessary, because there was a decree to that purpose already; and he added an assertion which the subsequent events of the revolution have not confirmed, namely, that 'their characters were so sacred, that the most unworthy among them, if any of them could be conceived to be unworthy, would be so protected, that no assailant would ever be able to reach them, without passing over the dead bodies of many virtuous men, ready to shed their blood in their defence.'

While the assembly were debating on this subject, a deputation from the *commune* of Paris entered; and Brissot, who at that time belonged to it, pronounced a discourse expressive of the joy of the capital in the expectation of receiving the national assembly within her bosom; and assuring them of personal protection and the enjoyment of the utmost freedom of debate; for that the commune of Paris were filled with sentiments of respect for the national assembly, and desirous of opportunities of

shewing their obedience to it. Those assurances of the commune were afterwards made good in the same manner as the assertion of Mirabeau.

There is little doubt but that Brissot acted in concert with Mirabeau on this occasion: for although the former was a republican, and the latter wished to preserve the monarchical form of government, in which he expected to have great weight, they both imagined that their different views would be promoted by the removal of the national assembly as well as the king from Versailles to Paris.

The violence which had been used to the royal family, and the design of removing the assembly to that very place in which the violence originated, disgusted M. Lally-Tolendal and M. Mounier so much, that, despairing of being of any service to their country as deputies, they withdrew from the assembly and retired to the provinces. Many other deputies of less distinction followed their example. But M. Mounier did not announce his intention of retiring until he had made a motion for decreeing an order for an inquiry into the massacres committed on the 6th of October, and for prosecuting the authors. It will easily be believed, that many were displeased at any such investigation. It does honour to M. Mounier's character as a friend of justice and a man of firmness, and to the characters of those who supported his motion, that they persevered in spite of all opposition until it was carried; which was the foundation of the subsequent proceedings of the chatelet on the subject.

M. Malouet, however, and others who equally disapproved of the violent measure of removing the king from Versailles, thought it their duty to remain, in the hopes of obtaining for their country a constitution as like to that of Great Britain as circumstances would admit, and equally free from the hopeless and gloomy tranquillity of despotism, and the execrable excesses of vulgar licentiousness.

While a hall was preparing for the reception of the deputies at Paris, they had a few more sittings at Versailles,

in which it was decreed that the right of proposing laws, as well as that of imposing taxes, belonged to the assembly alone; and the king's ministers were declared responsible for whatever was transacted in their different departments.

These regulations seem of real importance in a free constitution; but they likewise decreed that the king's title of king of France should be changed into that of king of *the French*; because it is more correct to call the supreme magistrate the governor of men than of the country where they live. So much precision on such a subject, however, was more worthy of grammarians than of legislators. But should monarchy ever be established again in France, it would not be surprising that the monarch, in contemplation of the monstrous deeds which have been lately perpetrated by Frenchmen, should rather choose to be called king of the country than of the inhabitants; and there can be little doubt but that the great personage who still possesses the title of king of France would infinitely rather renounce it for ever than live a single day among such subjects.

For a week at least after the royal family were lodged in the Tuilleries, they were under the mortifying necessity of shewing themselves at the windows every day, and some days oftener than once, merely to satisfy the clamorous curiosity of the multitude. Even if this had proceeded from affection, the frequent repetition of such demands would have rendered them oppressive; but they were doubly so, as it was evident they came from those who expressed no attachment to the royal family, and wished only to enjoy the triumph of having obliged them to come to Paris.

M. La Fayette had for some time perceived that the national guards were not so ready and cheerful in their obedience to his orders as formerly. On some occasions they had even manifested a tendency to mutiny; which was the more alarming at this time, as the rabble also were uncommonly tumultuous. The duke of Orleans was

strongly suspected of being the author of these excesses of the rabble, and the mutinous disposition of the national guards. He was not more odious to the court than to M. La Fayette, and would have been arrested, had it not been judged imprudent to venture on so decisive a measure in the present circumstances. Another plan less likely to create popular commotion, but which it was thought would have all the good effect of arresting him, was adopted.

M. La Fayette waited on the duke of Orleans, and abruptly informed him, that 'it afforded matter of surprise that he had not gone to England, as he had sometime before told the king was his intention; that the public tranquillity did not admit his remaining longer in France; that a passport was prepared for him; and that the pretext for his journey might, if he pleased, be a private commission from his majesty.' Although the duke seemed to have dropped all thoughts of this expedition, yet on this hint from M. La Fayette he immediately agreed to set out. There was probably something very powerful in M. La Fayette's *manner*, which convinced the duke so suddenly of the expediency of this journey; for in the *expressions* he used there appears nothing very persuasive.

When M. de Montmorin announced to the national assembly, that the king had given to the duke of Orleans a commission to go to England, and that he only waited for a passport from the assembly, it occasioned much surprise. Mirabeau spoke of it as a new species of *lettre de cachet* rather than a commission, and hinted at the imperious conduct of La Fayette, and the submission of the duke, in terms which did no honour to the latter. The assembly seem not to have been deceived by the pretext assigned by the minister; yet the passport was granted, and the duke departed.

The national assembly were received by the inhabitants of Paris with demonstrations of joy. On the day of their first sitting, they were waited on by M. Bailly the mayor

and M. La Fayette, at the head of a deputation from the municipality, with the congratulations of the capital; in return for which these two gentlemen were honoured by a vote of thanks from the assembly for the services they had rendered the country.

Such symptoms of harmony and good-humour were not of long continuance. The predictions of those members who had always foreseen the worst effects from their deliberating in the midst of an unrestraining multitude soon began to be verified. There was a certain degree of real scarcity of provisions; but this was supposed to be augmented by artificial means, for the most wicked purposes. It was rumoured at one time, that there was a scheme for starving the people—an accusation absurd, it is true, but peculiarly calculated to inflame the rage of a multitude already suffering under the sensation of hunger, and to whom a full meal was at all times precarious.

It was spread abroad also, that there was a plot to poison them with unwholesome provisions; in proof of which incredible assertion, some men brought a number of sacks of flour which they declared to be spoiled, and emptied them into the Seine as near as possible to the windows of the Tuilleries. This was done with a view of insinuating to the multitude that the court was connected with the conspiracy.

Every degree of wickedness was to be expected from men who could invent such a species of calumny, and every degree of absurdity from those who were weak enough to believe it. At this time the duke of Orleans was in England; and those who had excited the populace to go to Versailles for the purpose of obliging the royal family and the national assembly to come to Paris, had obtained their end. It does not appear that the leaders of any political faction could have any interest in spreading these stories, or creating the disorders which immediately followed; which seem to have entirely proceeded from the absurd prejudices of the vulgar, and the inactivity, or rather the inability, of law. Had the duke of

Orleans been at Paris, however, it would probably have been said that he was the author of them, with a view to have the whole family massacred.

It will not seem surprising, that in such times individuals often pointed out the objects of their own private hatred and revenge as the enemies of the public, thereby to expose them to the fury of the rabble; an affecting instance of which occurred in the case of a baker. A woman, instigated by personal malice, accused this man of being a monopolist, and prompted the mob to break into his house and search for bread. A few loaves were found, which were designed for his own family, and a greater number of little rolls bespoke by some members of the national assembly, near which his bakehouse was. This appeared to the rabble a full proof of the woman's accusation. He was dragged before the committee sitting at the Hotel de Ville; who were soon convinced of his innocence, from the answer he made to his accusers, and from the excellent character given of him by those of his neighbours who followed him to the committee; but, fearing to declare their real sentiments, they deputed three of their own members to inform the multitude, that the baker was to be carried before the chatelet, to be tried according to law. So far from being satisfied with this, the rabble seized those deputies, and threatened to hang them instead of the baker, if he was not immediately delivered up to them. The committee, as a last means of saving the baker, proposed to interrogate the witnesses immediately, in the great hall, and in the hearing of the populace; but when the unhappy man was conducting to the hall, he was torn from the guards, murdered in the square of the Greve, and his head fixed on a pike was met by his young wife, three months gone with child, as she rushed through the crowd to lend her feeble aid to her husband.

A murder attended with so many aggravating circumstances, perpetrated in the presence of some of their own members, and almost at their own door, convinced the majority of the assembly that their personal safety was into-

rested in checking the excesses to which the Parisian populace were so prone, and for which the assembly had hitherto shewn so much indulgence. The massacre of the king's guards, and breaking into the queen's apartment with the intention of serving her in the same manner, might, *for reasons of state*, be overlooked; but to murder a baker, and the very baker who furnished them with rolls, they seem to have thought a more serious affair, and to merit greater attention.

It was therefore proposed, that 'the magistrates should be authorized, on the appearance of a riot, to call the assistance of the military, and proclaim martial law; after which that a red flag should be displayed from the town-house, as a signal that all assemblies of the populace, armed and unarmed, should be considered as criminal; and, in case they refused to disperse on being ordered by the magistrate, that it should be declared to be his duty to order them to be fired upon; and that those who escaped should be afterwards liable to legal prosecution.'

There were members of the assembly who thought such a decree by much too severe. Robespierre in particular is said to have laid the foundation-stone of his towering popularity on this occasion. He declared that 'he saw many dangers which menaced liberty in the passing of this decree, which might be so easily turned against the most active patriots, and which evidently tended to raise the hopes of aristocrates, and to damp that glow of freedom which it was necessary to cherish in the breasts of the people. The disposition of the Parisians was in general excellent;' he confessed that 'he had a cordial affection for them, and could not see them threatened with any danger without shuddering. The good people of Paris,' he said, (and what he said quickly flew from the galleries all over the town), 'were very seldom in the wrong, always meant well, and could not be justly punished for the errors they might fall into, or the mistakes they might commit, when they were pinched with hunger. How venial were their errors when compared with the

guilt of those who obstructed provisions, and created an artificial famine!' He expatiated on the wisdom of lenient measures towards the people, and of the dreadful consequences that might follow from employing a military force, by which many innocent and well-meaning people might be destroyed. He extolled as the first of virtues compassion to the poor and the worthy: for Robespierre always used those two words, as well as their opposites, the rich and the worthless, as synonymous. He expressed a horror against bloodshed worthy of a Bramin; and drew such an affecting picture of the slaughter of men, women, and children, by a fire from the soldiers, as brought tears from the eyes of some persons in the gallery; while others affecting severer virtues and more profound political sagacity, shook their heads, and declared 'that, although Robespierre might be a well-meaning patriot, he was by much too tender-hearted for a statesman.'

Robespierre's eloquence, however, encouraged some of the districts to protest against the martial law, but did not prevent its being decreed in the assembly, approved of by the municipality, and supported by the national guards; which produced the happy effect of establishing order and quiet for some time.

The actual murderer of the baker was tried and executed, with another fellow who had attempted to excite the people to insurrection. The king and queen testified their sympathy with the affliction of the baker's widow, in a consolatary message delivered to her by the duke de Liancourt with a present of six thousand livres.

The new decree having produced an interval of order and tranquillity, the national assembly applied itself with indefatigable diligence to public business. The political existence of the noblesse and clergy was extinguished by a laconic decree, expressing that *there was no longer any distinction of orders in France.*

The election of the deputies to the national assembly was regulated according to a plan proposed by the abbé

Sieyes. In the first instance there was to be an election of deputies in what were called the primary assemblies; and, by a second election, those deputies were to choose the members who were to represent the people in the national assembly. A very slender qualification with respect to property entitled a man to vote in the first instance; and very little more sufficed to give him a right to vote in the second.

The ancient division of the kingdom into provinces, all of which had their own particular parliaments and jurisdiction, and were all subdivided into governments, dioceses, and bailiwicks, according to the military, ecclesiastical, and judicial orders, was entirely abolished. Those divisions and subdivisions, with the particular privileges that had been annexed to some of them, had produced many prejudices, animosities, and jealousies, and were thought inconsistent with that equal and harmonious government which was intended to be formed in France. All privileges of every kind having been abolished, it was thought prudent to efface every trace of their having ever existed. According to the new plan, France was divided into eighty-three portions called departments. The whole number of deputies to the national assembly was to be seven hundred and forty-five. To have decreed that the number of deputies should depend on the extent of territory in each department would have been absurd; because a department may be as extensive as another, and have fewer inhabitants. To have made the number depend solely on the population would have rendered the government entirely democratic. And to have regulated the number of deputies that each department should have the privilege of choosing, by the quantity of money raised by taxation, would have been opening a door to the aristocracy of mere riches, more sordid and odious than that of birth or title. Instead of founding on any one of those principles, it was thought that the deficiencies in one would be compensated by the merit of the others, and that the result of combining the three

would be the most perfect mode of election for a legislative assembly, in the same manner as the judicious mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, in the British constitution, is thought to exhibit the most perfect model of a free, mild, and happy government.

The extent, population, and contribution of the department were to be attended to, therefore, in determining the number of representatives each was to send to the national assembly. As the extent of all the eighty-three departments was nearly equal, each was appointed to send three deputies, on that principle, the department of Paris being excepted; which, on account of its extent being so much smaller than any of the others, was allowed to send only one. So that two hundred and forty seven were elected on the principle of extent of territory, two hundred and forty-nine on that of population, and the same number on that of contribution; amounting in all to the number decreed, namely, seven hundred and forty-five: but the number of deputies sent from each department in virtue of its population and contribution, was proportionate to the number of the inhabitants, and to the taxes they paid. Had all the departments been equal as to those two articles, each would have sent nine deputies, except that of Paris, which for the reason mentioned above would have sent seven only: but as there were great inequalities in those two articles, the number of deputies sent from the different departments was also unequal—some sending only five, particularly the departments des Hautes-Alpes, de la Lozere, and des Pyrenées-Orientales; others only six; some seven; and so on every number to fifteen, the number sent by the department de Rhone-et-Loire and de la Seine-Inférieure; none of the rest sending so many, except the department of Paris, which, notwithstanding the deduction of two made from it on account of its small extent, sent on the whole twenty-four members, because of its vast population and contribution.

It was decreed that this assembly should subsist two

years; and a new one was to be always formed in the same manner at the end of the same period. In this plan, one of the wisest articles perhaps is that which excludes the primary assemblies from the right of directly choosing the representatives of the nation, and confines their privilege to that of naming the electors of the representatives; for although the lower classes in society are not supposed to be adequate judges of the qualities requisite for a member of the national assembly, or to have opportunities of being acquainted with those who possess them, yet they are fully competent to know what men in their own districts are reputed men of integrity and good sense, and will of course be inclined to choose those as the properest for electing the national representatives.

In the opinion of many, the French would have done well to have fixed on the British constitution as the entire model of theirs. In the opinion of some, the British nation would do well to reform their representation in the house of commons according to the French system of election. Those who are of the first opinion quote the happy and prosperous state of Great Britain: those who are of the second do not mention the present state of France as a corroboration of theirs.

Previous to the secession of M. Lally-Tolendal and M. Mounier, there was some disposition in the assembly to have modelled the French constitution as nearly according to the British as possible. Perhaps pride or prejudice may have had some weight in preventing this idea from being adopted; if so, it is to be regretted. But that national pride, or something of a prejudice in favour of their own opinions, should have influenced the minds of Frenchmen, ought not greatly to surprise those worthy Englishmen, who are persuaded not only that their own form of government is the happiest effort of human genius, but also that it would, without the least variation, suit the inhabitants of every nation on earth, however different from themselves in manners, situation, and character.

That Great Britain has increased in power in a greater proportion than any other nation in Europe since the revolution 1688; that its inhabitants have acquired more wealth; that this wealth is more equally diffused, and that their persons and property are better protected and secured than those of the inhabitants of any other country, is known to all the world; that all those advantages were derived from that blessed portion of liberty which belongs to the British constitution, and of which most other governments are devoid, has long been the opinion of many enlightened men in France, which they have been at great pains to render manifest, and to circulate among their countrymen. That exhilarating spirit of activity, enterprise, and ardour, which a love of freedom conveys to the heart of man, was felt by the whole French nation at the time of calling the states-general; but many of those elected as legislators, thinking they never could have too much of it, rashly intermingled such a quantity into their constitution, that, instead of an invigorating cordial, it had the most fiery, intoxicating, and destructive effects.

This observation, however, is not so applicable to the first constituent assembly as to the assemblies which succeeded. In the first there were undoubtedly a greater number of men of distinguished talents and eminence, in every sense of the word, than in any of the others; and although on some occasions, from a dread of the agents of despotism and a suspicion of the court, they behaved with harshness to the king, yet it seems evident that the views and wishes of the majority were to give an equitable government to their country, by which both the prince and people would have been gainers. That they were friends to monarchy, as well as to freedom, they gave the strongest proof, in reinstating the king, and presenting him with the constitution after his flight to Varennes, notwithstanding the cry which was raised for the *Dechéance*, and the attempts made by the republican party for oversetting the monarchy and establishing a republic at that

time. But the second, or, as it is called, the legislative assembly, acted in a very different manner from their predecessors. Although one of the greatest errors in the form of election of the deputies was, that the qualification of the electors in point of property was too small, which rendered the elections tumultuous, and accompanied with more of a republican spirit than, in the opinion of some, is consistent with a monarchical form of government however limited; yet the legislative assembly could not trust that form of election, because they feared it was not sufficiently republican; and therefore, after the 10th of August 1792, they decreed that in the election of members for the convention it should be departed from; and that, instead of the small share of property formerly requisite to entitle any man to vote, all that should be necessary was a year's residence in the department, and that he should be of the age at which the law presumes a capability of exercising personal rights: the consequence of which, and of other manœuvres that took place during the general election, was, that the most zealous republicans that were to be found in France were chosen members of the convention, and monarchy was abolished *par acclamation* as soon as it met.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Decree respecting Bankrupts—Opinion of Mirabeau on that Subject—of the Duke of Rochefoucault—Abolition of Monasteries—for appropriating the Church-Lands—Abolition of Titles—Reflections on that Subject, and on Armorial Bearings—Respect derived from Antiquity of Family—The effect which the Creation of Peers has on it.

NOTHING can give a higher idea of the assiduity with which the national assembly applied to the business of the state, than the regulations they made within a very few months after the king's arrival in the capital. They abolished *lettres de cachet*; suppressed the tax upon salt,

so oppressive to the poor; also that on tobacco, not equally so, but still very grievous, since habit has rendered the use of that plant almost a necessary of life. Many other burdensome and impolitic taxes and impositions were either entirely suppressed, or regulated in a manner to render them less heavy on the lower orders in particular. A decree was passed, that all persons, whether professing the Roman Catholic religion or not, might be appointed to any office or employment; and the principle which attached infamy to the descendents of those who were executed for crimes was abolished.

Several new regulations respecting the fleet and army were made; and as it was thought of the greatest importance that the latter should be kept in good-humour, their pay was considerably augmented. The abolition of all the privileges, separate laws, and particular rights, which had been long enjoyed by certain provinces, to the injury of the rest of the kingdom, was universally approved of by the impartial.

In the republic of Geneva, bankrupts are excluded from the public council, the magistracy, or any office in the state: the children of bankrupts are by law subjected to the same penalty till such time as they pay their proportion of their father's debts. Montesquieu mentions this law in high terms of praise. Many who may have the same good opinion of this law that Montesquieu had, will still be surprised that *Mirabeau* should have recommended it. 'In the present situation of France,' said he, 'des loix pareilles sont non seulement utiles mais indispensables. Vainement, messieurs, vous avez aboli les privilèges et les ordres, si vous laissez subsister cette prérogative de fait qui dispense l'homme d'un certain rang de payer ses dettes ou celles de son père; qui fait languir la commerce, et qui trop souvent dévoue l'industrie laborieuse de l'artisan et du boutiquier, à soutenir le luxe effréné, de ce que nous appellons si improprement *l'homme comme il faut.*

'Laissons à cette nation voisine, dont la constitution

nous offre tant de vues sages, dont nous craignons de profiter, cette loi injuste, reste honteux de la feodalité, qui met à l'abri de toutes poursuites pour dettes le citoyen que la nation appelle à la représenter dans son parlement. Profitons de l'exemple des Anglois; mais sachons éviter leurs erreurs; et, au lieu de recompenser le désordre dans la conduite, éloignons de toute place dans les assemblées, tant nationales que provinciales et municipales, le citoyen qui, par une mauvaise administration de ses propres affaires, se montrera peu capable de bien gérer celles du public.' *

The reader will be the less surprised at Mirabeau's declamation against bankrupts, after perusing Robespierre's against bloodshed; but the national assembly must have heard Mirabeau with more surprise than Robespierre; because none of them at that time were acquainted with the vindictive and cruel disposition of the latter, but they all knew that the former was a bankrupt.

His proposal, however, that the assembly should adopt the law of Geneva, was received with applause; in the midst of which, the duke de la Rochefoucault rose to oppose that part of the law which regarded the children of bankrupts.

He delivered his opinion in terms worthy of the mode-

* Such laws are not only useful, but indispensably necessary. In vain have you decreed the abolition of privileges and distinctions, if men in any situation are still to be tolerated in refusing to pay their own debts, or those of their father. This is hurtful to commerce, and too often obliges the laborious industry of the tradesman and shopkeeper to support the unbounded luxury of those improperly called good company.

Let us leave that neighbouring nation, whose constitution presents us with so many wise regulations, which we are afraid to adopt, in possession of this unjust law, a remnant of feudal injustice, which protects the persons of members of parliament from arrest on account of debt. We may in many things profit by the example of the English; but let us avoid their errors; and, instead of rewarding extravagant and dissolute conduct, let us exclude from the national and provincial assemblies and the magistracy, every man who, by the mismanagement of his own private concerns, shews that he is incapable of conducting prudently the business of the public.

ration, good sense, and generosity, which belonged to his character. 'J'ai vu moi-même,' said he, 'les heureux effets qu'elle a produits à Genève; mais cependant elle me paroît contenir une disposition trop rigoureuse à l'égard des enfans des pères banque-routiers. Sans doute c'est un beau sentiment de la part d'un fils d'acquitter les dettes de son père; mais il faut laisser à la vertu à conseiller ce qui est honnête; les loix doivent se borner à prescrire ce qui est juste. Les fautes sont personnelles; l'homme coupable ou imprudent est puni; mais il ne faut pas étendre la punition sur les enfans déjà trop malheureux des torts de leur père.'*

The day following the debate on this subject was renewed. M. de la Rochefoucault's opinion was supported by the eloquence of M. Barnave. M. Mirabeau was absent. He entered the hall of the assembly as the duke's amendment was about to pass; which as soon as Mirabeau understood, he ascended the tribune. The assembly, under the impression of the arguments for the amendment, were averse from hearing him. With much difficulty he obtained leave to speak, which he did so successfully, that the decree passed to the following effect.—

'No bankrupt or insolvent debtor can remain or become a member of any municipal council or committee, nor of the provincial or national assemblies, nor exercise any public office whatever.

'The exclusion is to take place against the children or others who possess the goods of the bankrupt, by whatsoever title they may so do, except the children of the bankrupt who have received the portion before the bankruptcy took place.'

* I have myself seen its happy effects at Geneva; yet it seems to me to shew too harsh a disposition towards the children of bankrupts. It assuredly is a most laudable resolution in a son to pay the debts of his father; but we must leave it to virtue to prompt that which is generous; the law ought to ordain only what is just. Faults are personal: let the man who is imprudent or culpable be punished; but we ought not to extend the punishment to his children, who have already suffered by the ill conduct of their father.

This is a very striking proof of the vast influence that Mirabeau had in the assembly.

Proposals for the reduction of taxes were easily made; and those who made them were certain of acquiring popularity: but where to find funds to supply the place of the taxes reduced, to pay the interest of the public debt, and answer the other exigencies of the state, was a matter of more difficulty.

A measure adequate to all this, however, had been long in contemplation among those who are not scrupulous with regard to the means by which they are to attain their object. This was no other than seizing on the whole church lands, and appropriating them to the exigencies of the state. An alarm had been given that this was in meditation, by a decree already passed, which, however, was by no means equally unreasonable or unjust, namely, that for the abolition of monasteries.

It requires no wonderful talents for finance in any assembly of men to pay the public debts of the most involved nation in Europe, provided they are allowed to seize the fortunes of any number of the inhabitants for that purpose. Such a measure must reduce these devoted men to beggary, no doubt; but then the national debt will be extinguished, the taxes mightily diminished, and the remaining proprietors, with the whole body of the poor, will be in a more comfortable condition than ever.

The expedient of seizing the whole landed estates of the clergy seems precisely of this nature: and, after such a violent instance of rapine is sanctioned by law, no robbery can be punished in France with any regard to justice or to their favourite maxim of equality.

On pressing exigencies, when the general welfare or safety of a nation is at stake, unquestionably extraordinary measures must be taken; and, among others, it may be necessary that great pecuniary levies should be made: but, according to every idea of justice, this should be done by fair and equal contributions from the whole inhabitants, according to the best estimate that can be thought

of respecting the wealth of each. To single out any one class, like a deer of the forest, who is immediately abandoned by all his selfish and cowardly companions, is the height of injustice; and all the arguments urged in the assembly in favour of the measure are the sophisms of men endeavouring to palliate the enormity of a deed, which, for selfish considerations, they were predetermined to perpetrate.

It may be said, that, the opinion of the French nation at large on the subject of religion having changed, it would be absurd to preserve, at a vast expense, an establishment which is now thought in a great measure useless. But let it be remembered, that those who chose the church for their profession, as in all other professions, were educated in the conviction that the national establishment respecting the church was to be continued; and, till it is declared otherwise, they have the national faith for their security. It has been justly remarked, that to strip a clergyman of his benefice on the pretext that it belonged to the nation, and that the nation had need of the revenue, is as unjust as it would be to refuse to pay a prize in the state lottery, because it belonged to the nation, and because the nation had need of the money.

If all the inhabitants of France, therefore, had become deists in one day, still they would have been bound in equity to maintain all the clergy in the full possession of their benefices during their lives, and also to have given an indemnity to every student or expectant, for the time and application he had bestowed to qualify himself for a profession thought of the first importance, although by an unexpected alteration of opinion in his countrymen it was now thought useless.

The bishop of Autun and others, who were in possession of high ecclesiastical appointments, and had the highest in expectation, supported the measure of appropriating the church lands to the exigencies of the state. Views of interest or ambition have sometimes been the secret motives for actions apparently contrary to both; but ad-

mitting this conduct to have proceeded from the purest patriotism, still those gentlemen had a right to bestow only what they themselves possessed. There is neither patriotism nor generosity in *compelling* others to give what you are *willing* to yield up yourself. The landed estates of the church thus sequestered for the payment of the national debt, the clergy had nothing left but a precarious promise for the scanty pensions which were assigned to them.

On the whole, it must be acknowledged, that the vast fabric of wealth and power which in the course of ages had been raised by the Gallican church was overthrown by a pretended spirit of philosophy, in a manner as contrary to reason and equity as the superstition on which it was founded, or the avarice and ambition by which it was at first reared.

After this severity towards so powerful a body as the clergy, those who practised the profession of the law had no great reason to expect that much lenity would be shewn to them. By one decree all the parliaments of the kingdom were suspended from their functions; and, two days after, all titles of nobility and all distinction of orders were by another decree entirely abolished. This blow, which shook the whole noblesse of France from the stilts that had made them seem taller than their fellow citizens, and discovered that many were beneath the common standard, and some mere dwarfs, struck a general panic through the whole aristocracy of Europe, and created a band of as inveterate enemies to the revolution in every kingdom in Christendom as existed in France itself. But with whatever sensibility this blow was felt by those on whom it fell, it was treated as trifling and unsubstantial by that part of the national assembly who were out of its reach; many of whom affected a philosophical contempt for all such gewgaws as titles and ribbons, and never mentioned them without scorn and indignation. It is entertaining to observe philosophers, who cannot see a ribbon across a man's shoulders, nor hear a title pronoun-

ced, without falling into a passion, endeavour to ridicule the weakness of those who grieve at being deprived of them: for if it is weak to lament the loss of what they called gewgaws, it seems fully as weak not to be able to bear that they should be in the possession of others. Considering how universal the *affectation* of this contempt is, it seems surprising that the *reality* is so very rare. Like the fox in the fable contemplating the grapes, mankind in general speak with disdain of titles and ribbons when they are at such a distance as precludes the hope of attaining them; but snatch at them with eagerness as soon as they are brought within their reach.

With the distinction of orders and titles, armorial bearings and liveries were decreed to be abolished.

The affair of armorial bearings and liveries is managed better in Great Britain, where every tradesman is allowed to load his footman with as rich liveries as the vanity of the master exacts, and his purse can afford; and where for a moderate sum he may have what arms he pleases. Accordingly it is impossible to pass through the city of London without seeing on the carriages of grocers, brewers, bricklayers, contractors, and cheesemongers, as many helmets, shields, and spears, as were in Godfrey's army at the siege of Jerusalem. There are indeed some mortified relicts and descendants of nobility who lament, as a grievous abuse, that the carriages which drag the awkward offspring and bloated garbage of the city to a ball or feast at the mansion-house should be permitted to be as richly blazoned, as much admired by the ignorant, as those which convey the most ancient, and of course the purest, blood of the realm, to St. James's. This no doubt is afflicting to the pride of a few honourable persons, both male and female, whose feelings may be the same, although their sexes are different; but, on the other hand, it ought to be considered, that all kind of encouragement should be given to trade in this commercial nation, and that the affliction above mentioned is in some degree compensated by the innocent pleasure which a flaming coat of arms af-

fords to the wives and daughters of many respectable citizens, and to those respectable citizens themselves, who are more at a loss how to enjoy their fortune than they were how to acquire it. For it is well known, that riches and enjoyment are not always coupled together: if they were, the Royal Exchange of London would, at a certain hour every day, comprehend more happiness than the most extensive and best cultivated provinces in the world; which, from the many anxious and many vacant countenances to be seen there, we are apt to believe is not the case. Indeed there is reason to suspect, that this very valuable art of enjoying riches was somewhat of a rarity even in the Augustan age, since Horace compliments his accomplished friend Albius Tibullus for possessing it:

Dî tibi divitias dederânt, *artemque fruendi*

To allow a free participation of the enjoyments which heraldry affords to every British subject at a reasonable price, seems equitable: that it does afford pleasure to some, even after their age, conscience, and constitution have interdicted them from other pleasures, abundance of examples might be given. It may perhaps be thought excusable to quote one on account of its singularity.

After having made a considerable fortune by the exercise of his profession in the capital, a certain tailor retired to the province in which he had been born, on purpose, as he himself declared, to enjoy *otium cum dignitate*; for this tailor had been several years at a grammar school, and still remembered some sentences of Latin.

The coach in which he and his family arrived at the place of his residence in the country stood much in need of being new painted. His wife had given orders for this before they left London; but as he knew it would suffer by the journey, he begged that the painting might be postponed until the end of it: to which she at last consented, on his promising that instead of the cipher a coat of arms should be the coach's ornament in future. He chose for a crest a large pair of scissars expanded: gratitude, he said, dictated this; because they were the chief

instrument of his fortune. For his motto he chose the words *Vincere aut mori.* On being told that these words might be thought more suitable to a soldier than to a man of his profession; he said that he belonged to a military family; for his father had been hautboy to a regiment, and that he himself, in his youth, had felt some inclination for being a soldier, which he was prevented from indulging by the unexpected breaking out of a war; nothing could be more suitable therefore than the motto he had chosen: and he gave orders to the painter accordingly. But when his wife understood what had been decided, she declared that a mere crest and motto was little better than a cipher, and would look scandalously naked, which was what she could not bear. The husband consulted the curate respecting some additional device or ornament to cover the nakedness, and remove the objection made by his wife.

The curate, who was somewhat of a wag, observed that although scissars were made of cold iron as well as swords, yet some people might think that there was not a sufficient correspondence between the crest and the motto: it would therefore be of importance to contrive such ornaments as would link them a little better together. The tailor acknowledged the justness of this observation, but added, that he knew of none that would have that effect.

If you could assume supporters, said the curate, it might perhaps be easier done. I have no particular objection to supporters, rejoined the tailor, and I am sure they would delight my wife. Would you choose men or beasts? said the curate. I think one of each would be best, answered the tailor: pray, what beast would you advise me to? A lion by all means, said the curate; because, being the most powerful beast of the forest, he suits with *vincere* in your motto. That he does to a hair! exclaimed the tailor; but, added he, after musing for some time, I cannot conceive what kind of man will suit with *mori.* A dead man to be sure, said the curate. On

my conscience that is true! cried the tailor; and it is so obvious that I wonder I did not hit on it myself. The arms were ordered directly—a pair of scissars expanded, with a lion and a dead man supporting them. The tailor's wife was delighted, as he had foretold; and great was the importance which swelled his own heart when he remarked the admiration with which the villagers contemplated the emblematic painting on his coach, or when the import of the motto was explained to the gazing circle by the schoolmaster or some other of equal learning.

Why that disdainful smile at the vanity of this poor tailor? The story is told of yourself under another name. Let some, who ridicule his motto and lion, recollect, how little their own vain pretensions, low pursuits, debasing habits, and the whole despicable tenor of their lives, accord with the emblems or mottos of their coats of arms. Let them remember that, if truth and propriety were always observed in those articles, instead of lions, eagles, and other noble animals, many of them would have asses, hogs, peacocks, or dunghill cocks, for their supporters: and let them also remember, that the respect which is still paid to some of them proceeds entirely from a regard to the memory of men that are dead.

It may be said that this also is absurd; that every degree of esteem or dislike should depend on personal qualities; that the son of Shakespeare might have been a fool, the son of Hampden a slave, and that a whole line of heroic ancestry are no security against the descendant's being a coward; and, *vice versa*, that the son of a fool might be a first-rate genius; the son of a slavish-spirited father might be an intrepid asserter of liberty; and the descendant of a race of cowards might be a hero. This sentiment, therefore, which transfers any portion of the respect or disgrace due to the character of the father to the son is unreasonable. It certainly is so; but in this particular the prejudice is more powerful than our reason. It

is not so strong indeed in England as in Germany with their sixteen quarters, or as it was in France, where a man of worth and character was considered as disgraced, if his father or brother was executed on a scaffold; but still its influence is apparent. We see men every day, who live respected in society on that fund of esteem which was accumulated by their forefathers, although they themselves have not added one particle to it during the whole course of their lives: and, what must afford a candid mind more uneasiness, we likewise see individuals of much personal worth in some degree neglected and avoided on account of the infamous character of their parents. This prejudice unquestionably is to be surmounted in this country; but it requires time and continued efforts; for although every body admits that esteem and regard ought to depend entirely on personal qualities, yet even in this philosophical island every body may observe that they do not entirely, but are in some measure influenced by other circumstances. The greatest philosopher in the island feels elated when mention is made of the honourable conduct of his father, and will shrink with confusion at the most remote hint of his infamy. This feeling pervades mankind, the wise as well as the foolish, and continues until death. Even the condemned housebreaker and thief at the place of execution shews solicitude for the reputation of those from whom he is descended, and declares with his last breath, that he was born of poor but *honest* parents. However contrary this feeling may be to philosophy, it seems friendly to virtue; but there are other prejudices respecting birth, of which the same cannot be said, and some which are exceptions to that just mentioned; for, if a supposed progenitor is of very high rank, it removes in a great measure the shame which the son would otherwise feel at the recollection of the weakness or even wickedness of his character: for people are vain of being sprung from kings and princes, even although of the two persons from whom they originally derive that distinction, all the world knows that the

one was a knave and the other a w——. And people like to be of an old family rather than of a new, though no one person of the whole line has been distinguished for any praiseworthy quality. The known antiquity of a family alone, independent of other circumstances, gives it some degree of respectability. This no doubt is greatly increased by its producing persons of eminent talents or virtues; but even when no examples of that kind can be quoted in a family, that a certain degree of respect is due to its antiquity, seems agreeable to the general feelings and sentiments of society in Europe: and the degree of respect due to every gentleman's family in Great Britain and Ireland would be arranged and ascertained by the prevailing opinion of the country, founded on its antiquity and on the merit and brilliancy of the characters it had produced, were all these considerations left to their own natural operation. But this is in some measure disturbed by the unlimited power of the crown to create peers, which sometimes has been exerted where the public opinion would not have directed it. The patriotism of Hampden, the heroic character of Montrose, the victories of Marlborough, and the brilliant administration of Chatham, would have thrown a vast share of lustre on their descendants, although no peerage had ever existed. But when a man of no merit, or perhaps of demerit, is by the ill-judged favour of the prince created a peer, and raised to the highest rank of the peerage, instances of which are to be met with in the British history; then his family takes the precedence, and becomes more honourable, in one sense of the word, than those of all the peers of the realm beneath the rank of duke. Or if an enterprising footman in any of the most ancient and honourable families of the three kingdoms should afterwards, abroad or at home, by means not very honourable, acquire an immense fortune, with the command of boroughs, and be created a peer; his family instantly becomes more honourable than that of his master.

The unlimited prerogative of creating peers may be at-

tended with advantages which greatly overbalance the circumstances here enumerated, and may on the whole be a very wise institution; but, without presuming to give any opinion on that point, it seems evident that it in some degree counteracts the progressive course of importance derived from the mere antiquity of family, and to diminish a prejudice which it has been supposed to augment, and against which poets have often directed their satire, and philosophers declaimed.

CHAPTER XIX.

Plans of the Noblesse and Parliaments for Resistance ill combined and ineffectual—Endeavour to deprive the National Assembly of the public Confidence—Paper War—The ill Conduct of the French has injured the Cause of Freedom more than the Arguments of their Enemies—The Red Book—Misunderstanding between M. Necker and M. Camus—Power of Peace and War.

When the importance of the decrees which had been passed in a short time by the national assembly are considered, and how severely so many powerful classes of men must have felt themselves sufferers by the new regulations, it seems surprising that they were not resisted with more vigour. It is wonderful that the clergy in particular did not take the alarm sooner than they did, and try by every means in their power to prevent the calling of the states-general. It might have occurred to them, that in an incredulous age their immense riches would be a temptation to a set of men assembled for the purpose of clearing a vast load of debt, and willing to be at as little of the expense themselves as possible: but although the clergy might naturally have expected to be obliged to contribute a great deal, they could hardly dread being reduced to such scanty pensions as are not sufficient to enable them to support a decent existence.

All monastic establishments likewise were suppressed, the convent lands confiscated; the friars and nuns being

granted very moderate stipends, with the privilege to the latter to remain in their convents if they chose.

The parliaments, particularly that of Paris, had been long in the use of opposing the sovereign, by refusing or at least delaying to register his edicts, and by the remonstrances they published against them. The resistance which they had often made, joined to the bold spirit of some of their remonstrances, had no doubt prepared the public mind for some important change of government, and hastened the convocation of the states-general, which afterwards became the national assembly. After this the parliaments little thought that they should be among the earliest victims of a revolution which they had contributed so largely to found. Their indignation on this account rendered them much disposed to enter into any conspiracy against the new government.

The mortifications which the whole body of the noblesse had met with in a thousand instances, their sudden and complete loss of importance, and the dread of approaching anarchy, began to make an alteration in the opinion of many even of those who had been the most eager for the summoning of the states-general. The sacrifices into which some had been surprised in a moment of enthusiasm, and which others had been prompted to make from a spirit of retaliation, were repented of in the cool hours of reflection, and were highly disapproved of by many of the noblesse in the provinces, who had favoured the revolution at the beginning, from discontent with the court, from a fear of the Bastile, from a desire of having the liberty of going out of the kingdom when they pleased, and other reasons; but who now saw the torrent of democracy bearing so strongly against their whole body, that they willingly joined in any measures to stem it, at the risk of the ancient system's being re-established, with all its grievances. Their plans, however, were ill combined, and feebly supported. The parliament of Toulouse, with a considerable number of the nobility in that neighbourhood, ventured to publish a kind of manifesto,

'inviting all orders of citizens to unite for the preservation of the monarchy, of law, of property, and, above all, of religion, which were represented as in the utmost danger from the violence of those who had usurped all the powers of government, and kept the king himself in captivity.'

The ancient provincial states were in various places summoned to assemble. Those of Bearn and Dauphiné actually met; and in the form of assembling in the latter the distinction of orders was observed. Protests were taken by the states in several other provinces against the decree relating to church lands.

The chamber of vacations at Rouen acted in a manner highly unbecoming the character of lawyers, and too like the practices of pettifoggers. They *openly* registered the act suspending their power, and *secretly* protested against what they had done, and transmitted their protest to the king.

This despicable conduct shocked the candid mind of the monarch. He informed the national assembly of the whole transaction. The national assembly, being highly irritated, were disposed to the utmost severity against the offenders. M. de Frondeville, who was both president of the parliament and also of the chamber of vacations, attempted to palliate their conduct, by declaring at the bar of the assembly, that the protest was meant only as a mark of respect to his majesty; and, being conscious that his assertion was not very credible, he attempted to move them by imploring *with tears* the clemency of the assembly.

All this would probably have been to little purpose, had not the king himself written a letter in favour of the chamber of vacations: and the proceedings against them were stopped with difficulty; for many members of the assembly contended that they ought to be punished. The majority, however, in deference to the king, voted forgiveness.

The parliament of Metz protested against the decree of the assembly which suspended them from their functions; and when they had enjoyed the applause which they imagined belonged to them for a conduct so spirited, they began to consider how they would be able to support it, and avert the indignation of the national assembly. It would certainly have been more prudent in the parliament of Metz to have made this reflection before they took the protest; but that method has at no period been very prevalent in France; and, in the course of the present revolution in particular, it is to be remarked that on many important occasions its greatest heroes have acted in the first place, and deferred reflection until they were cooler. This, we are assured, does not proceed from any deficiency of judgment in the French, but merely from their natural vivacity, which outruns their judgment. When the parliament of Metz had time to reflect on what they had done, their judgment, though a little tardy, informed them that they had no means of supporting their protest, or resisting the power of the national assembly, and that their only resource was submission, retracting their protest, and imploring forgiveness; to render which more certain, they stooped to request the mediation of the municipality with the national assembly; and it was in consequence of this mediation that an amnesty was granted.

The national assembly displayed so much firmness, and seemed so little intimidated by those indications of discontent, and the partial insurrections which through the influence, as was supposed, of the nobility, the clergy, and members of the provincial parliaments, frequently burst forth, that the idea of a counter-revolution became weaker every day. But what proves that those disorders did not entirely proceed from the political dissensions of the times, but often arose from an undistinguishing disposition to pillage, is, that the houses and castles of some of the most distinguished among the popular party, as those of M.

Charles Lameth, the duke of Aiguillon, and others, as well as those of the aristocratic party, were plundered by the mobs.

There is no question, however, but that the steady countenance which the national assembly retained amid the dangers which threatened them depended on the approbation of the people in general; and that the timid conduct of the parliaments, so different from that boldness which they had manifested before the revolution in opposing the measures of the government, was owing to their finding the voice of the people, which had formerly been with them, now so much against them.

It was evident, therefore, that all attacks on the national assembly would be vain as long as they retained the confidence of the people; and, to have any hopes of effecting a counter-revolution, that it was absolutely necessary to remove this, and give them an ill opinion of that body. With this view a multitude of pamphlets were published daily against the conduct of the assembly, pointing out the wickedness or folly of their decrees, and turning the characters and persons of the members into ridicule.

This kind of attack was retorted with the same weapons; and, as at this time the freedom of the press was allowed in its utmost licentiousness, not only the ancient government and the conduct of the present ministers were painted in the blackest colours, but the characters of the king and queen were also libelled, with a malignity unequalled in any age or country.

The conflict at this period resembled the skirmishes of slingers and light troops which preceded the battles of the ancients; but soon after the full-armed force on both sides shocked with each other.

As this paper war was not confined to France, but was extended to other nations; and as the clergy of all nations were generally the enemies of the French revolution; it was imagined from the number and ability of so

many ready-mustered assailants, it would be more powerfully attacked than defended.

It is universally acknowledged, however, that the most eloquent and most severe work against the revolution that has appeared, is not the production either of an ecclesiastic or a Frenchman. The writer alluded to has in many parts of this performance displayed the imagination of a poet, and in some the foresight of a prophet; yet his work made more admirers than proselytes.

Men's political opinions it is generally difficult to alter. They are greatly influenced by our early education, and by our connections of blood or friendship, which on many minds make too deep an impression to be effaced by eloquence or reasoning. Political opinions are also under another influence, which is often too powerful for eloquence and reasoning, namely, people's views of interest and ambition. At first sight it may be imagined, that such views could only affect their conduct, but not their real opinion; but observation has taught us, that when interest leans decidedly to one side, opinion is apt gradually to take the same bias. Reason and eloquence, therefore, can have full effect on those only who consider the subject in discussion according to its own intrinsic merit, regardless of the circumstances above mentioned.

The converts made by the writings on both sides were on this account much fewer than they would otherwise have been; and although some of them were admirably written, they had little more effect on the cause than many eloquent speeches in the British parliament, which only furnish the members with arguments that never occurred to themselves, in support of the vote which, at all events, they were determined to give.

The shocking conduct of certain frothy monsters, who, in the progressive fermentation of the French revolution, were raised to the summit, have injured it more in the minds of mankind than all the writings that appeared against it.

The love of liberty is naturally linked in the mind with the most generous, endearing, and elevated sentiments: intrepidity, benevolence, cheerfulness, genius, prosperity, candour, friendship, and love, when personified by the imagination, move hand in hand with freedom, like the attendants of Aurora in Guido's picture. But the monsters above mentioned have done all in their power to destroy her attractions, and to give her for companions anarchy, cruelty, envy, rancour, suspicion, hypocrisy, fraud, and misery: so that the very name of liberty, according to a strong allusion of Mirabeau, makes the same impression on some people that water does on those afflicted with the hydrophobia.

And, what is equally to be lamented, the conduct of those same wretches who disgraced the cause of liberty has rendered the gloomy form of despotism less terrible, and the debasing expressions of servility less disgusting, even to those who formerly dreaded and abhorred them above all other evils.

Soon after the royal family began their residence at Paris, a book was brought into notice, which immediately excited more attention than any other. It was called the Red Book; and contained a register of all the pensions, donations, and every kind of expenditure of the public money by the court for the last twenty years. A committee had been appointed by the assembly to make inquiry into this expenditure. The committee had heard of this red book. They required of M. Necker that it should be communicated to them, as necessary to enable them to make an accurate report to the assembly. The king expressed his reluctance to this, that the profusion of his grandfather might not be exposed to the eyes of the public. There were certain articles of a later date, which, no doubt, he was equally anxious should remain concealed. To remove those difficulties, M. Camus, the president of the committee, wrote to M. Necker.—

'Il ne s'agit pas de divulguer, pour servir d'aliment à une vaine curiosité, des details dont la publicité pourroit

faire quelque peine au roi. Pénétrés, comme toute l'assemblée, des sentimens du plus profond respect pour un prince qui fait le bonheur de son peuple, les membres du comité mettront toujours beaucoup de réserve dans les opérations qui l'interesseront; mais il est indispensable que quelques-uns des ses membres puissent déclarer à l'assemblée qu'ils ont vu ce livre, et qu'ils ont pris les notes necessaires au travail qui leur a été confié.' *

M. Necker reminded the commissioners of the committee of these expressions in the president's letter, and added that it was in consequence of them that the king confided the register into their hands.

M. Necker must have been greatly surprised when he found a few days after that the red book was published, without the king's consent, and without a decree of the assembly.

If M. Necker had reason to be surprised, M. Camus had some reason to be ashamed. Nothing, however, can be a stronger proof that he was not, than the answer he made to M. Necker, when he was asked how he could allow the book to be published, after the letter he had written, and without permission either from the king or the assembly. ' Nous sommes surs de n'être pas desavoués,' replied M. Camus, ' par l'assemblée; quant au roi, nous ne sommes pas ses représentans.' †

Many articles of this register were calculated to excite clamours against the court; none more than that which related to the king's younger brother, the count d'Artois;

* There is no intention of divulging circumstances that might give uneasiness to the king; the publication of which could serve no purpose but that of gratifying idle curiosity. Penetrated, like the whole assembly, with sentiments of profound respect for a prince who promotes the happiness of his people, the committee will always conduct themselves with delicacy in whatever concerns him: but it is necessary that some members should be enabled to declare in the assembly, that they have seen the book in question, and that they have taken notes respecting the business which has been intrusted to them.

† We are certain that our conduct will not be disapproved of by the assembly; as for the king, we are not his representatives.

according to which this prince had received from the public treasury, during the short administration of M. Calonne, above a million sterling. The count's debts amounted to nearly as much, which could not be imputed to M. Calonne; for it was asserted and believed that he had, with admirable generosity, urged the king to pay them all, and as speedily as possible, for this cogent reason, that their speedy payment was of importance to the prince's *tranquillity*.

If it were not a general opinion that princes very seldom have friends, it might seem surprising that no one represented to the comte d'Artois how exceedingly impolitic his profusion was at a period when the people were burdened with taxes, and when such general discontent prevailed in the nation; particularly when it might with equal truth have been represented, how infinitely becoming it would be in him, by a retrenchment of his expenses, to pay his creditors without any new burden on a nation already so heavily burdened. And such retrenchment to a man of his high rank ought to be a smaller sacrifice than to any other person; because all essential pleasures and gratifications he would continue to enjoy, and that respect and precedence which others attempt to purchase by profusion and ostentatious expense, his high birth secured to him without them.

It will not be thought extraordinary that the pensions were not precisely in proportion to the merit of the pensioner, or that, in the opinion of several, those who had the largest were often the least deserving; but there were reasons assigned for some which will seem singular even to those who are best acquainted with the manner in which such rewards are generally distributed, particularly one which was appointed to a gentleman, because he had been obliged to assign part of his revenues to his creditors till his debts should be paid; and several persons were conspicuous on this list who, according to the popular opinion, deserved public reprobation or punishment more than

reward. It appeared by this register, that 100,660 livres were distributed in annual pensions to performers at the opera who had retired. This, it was thought, was paying too much for an entertainment which the inhabitants of Paris had previously purchased at the door of the theatre. Eighteen millions of livres were distributed in pensions among the military. This sum appeared so enormous to one person, that he declared that Alexander might have pensioned the officers who assisted him in the conquest of the world at no greater expense. Upon the whole, however, this article was less disapproved of than others. The indignation was highest against certain courtiers who never served in the armies, and certain favourites of both sexes who, previous to the publication of the register, were the objects of popular odium.

Many other observations were made in the national assembly, when this business of the pensioners was brought forward, which must have been mortifying to those of them who were present.

'It is most hard,' said one member, 'that those who are barely able to provide their families with the necessaries of life should be obliged to contribute to the superfluities of idle courtiers.' 'What renders it more intolerable,' observed another, 'is, that those who live at the expense of the people look upon them with disdain; they consider them as an inferior race of beings, created to labour without enjoyment; while they consider themselves as having a right to enjoyment without labour. To be able to count in their families a long line of indolent men, who cultivated no talent, and were entirely useless to the state, they call having ancestry; and on this is founded their claim for pensions.' 'They hold down their heads,' said a third, 'when their pensions are mentioned; but they all shew their faces again when they are to be paid.' A fourth said, 'There are but two just titles to any succour of this kind from the state; one is, services rendered to the country, and the other is unmerited poverty;

and the time, it is to be hoped, approaches, when, without those two united, no man will accept of a pension from government who would refuse an alms.'

The total list of pensions amounted to about 34,000,000 of livres. This afforded a fruitful theme of declamation against the court and courtiers. There were members, however, who had the courage to oppose the popular torrent on this occasion. The abbé Maury asserted that the amount was not surprising, considering the immense armies and fleets which France was obliged to maintain, where such numbers of wounded and superannuated officers retired from the service were to be provided for. 'It is worthy,' continued he, 'of a great nation like France to take generous care of its defenders: the assembly ought not narrowly to examine what those brave men have cost their country: those brave men did not calculate what the service of their country would cost them. Do not, therefore, give them reason to regret that they placed confidence in the generosity of the country they served.'

The duke of Liancourt observed, that, of all the resources which the necessities of the state obliged them to adopt, the most painful was a reduction of the rewards bestowed on merit, and especially the merits of men of that profession, among whom the contempt of death was so general, that it was scarcely considered by them as a virtue.

These and similar observations prevented the violent reductions at first proposed; and a plan was finally adopted, more conformable to justice as well as humanity: for it was justly remarked, that even abuses of long standing cannot be overset at once without injustice; and, however lightly such things are spoken of by those who are not to be personally affected by them, every plan for the relief of the public, at the expense of any one class of the community, is an act of cruelty; because the injury done to the sufferers is most exquisitely felt; whereas the benefit received, being spread over the whole nation, is hardly perceived by any particular citizen.

In consequence of the conduct above mentioned on the part of Camus, a breach took place between him and M. Necker; and the popularity of the latter declined from that moment. The reverse would have happened in England: Camus would have lost popularity, and M. Necker would not; because, although he was in some measure duped in this negotiation, his character for fair dealing and integrity was not touched. And in England the reputation of scrupulous honesty is not only necessary for maintaining public confidence and popularity, but it is almost sufficient of itself without any talent besides; whereas in France, honesty exclusively taken is not in such high estimation. What is the reason of this? A Frenchman would say, perhaps, because it is more common; but this solution would not be thought satisfactory in England. It is possibly owing to the French putting a greater estimation on certain glittering qualities which they themselves possess in a higher degree than their neighbours; each being prejudiced in favour of the staple commodity of his own country; as an English farmer prefers strong beer to Burgundy, and a French peasant, Burgundy to strong beer.

At this time there was some appearance of a rupture between Great Britain and Spain; and the minister laid before the national assembly the preparations which the king thought expedient, and the precautions he had taken on that occasion. This information gave rise to various discussions, and at last brought on a debate on the important question, into whose hands the nation ought to intrust the power of making war or peace.

One party were for placing it in the hands of the king, and another in the national assembly. There was nothing very new in the arguments used by either. Those who supported the first opinion urged the example of Great Britain, which enjoyed all the advantages of promptitude and secrecy that were attendant on this prerogative's belonging to the king, and was protected from the inconveniences by the privilege which the parliament retained of

refusing the subsidies. They at the same time hinted at the immediate necessity of augmenting their fleet, and taking measures for protecting their colonies against the attempts of England.

The other party spoke with contempt of the vaunted precaution of refusing subsidies, which, they said, like many other articles in the British constitution, was more beneficial in appearance than in reality: because this controul, although it might force the king to make a disadvantageous peace, did not prevent an impolitic or unjust war, which, when once declared, must be carried on for some time at all events; that to refuse subsidies during a war would be refusing to allow the nation to defend itself, and decreeing that all its inhabitants and property should be submitted to the power of an enemy: of course subsidies never could be refused. At the same time they assert, that the British nation was too magnanimous, and too great lovers of liberty, to attack France at a time when, after the example which England had given, she was struggling to establish a free government; that, however agreeable that might be to the selfish policy of some other nations, it was repugnant to the generous character of the English, whose love of general freedom surmounted all narrow views of interest and of ancient prejudices.

This question, like every other of any importance that came before the assembly, was discussed in every public garden, street, coffeehouse, tavern, and private family in Paris. The public opinion, pronounced by the awful voice of a heated and tumultuous majority, against this right being placed in the executive power; and the liberty of free discussion, the liberty of the press, and that general liberty which was then enjoyed in France, had already produced one of the worst effects of slavery, namely, rendering it dangerous for individuals to use the freedom said to be granted by expressing their genuine opinions, when they were contrary to that which prevailed among the people. Those who spoke in the national assembly in favour of the king's prerogative, on this occa-

sion, were not only exposed to the clamorous insults of the people as they went to and returned from it, but they were obliged to use address at the beginning of their speeches to engage the audience to allow them quietly to proceed. It had been proposed that a manifesto or declaration should be made by the assembly to all the nations in Europe, that France was determined against all augmentation of territory; never to attack her neighbours, nor to wage any war unless forced to it in self-defence, and for the purpose of repelling aggression. It was asserted that this declaration would prevent their being attacked by Great Britain or any of the neighbouring nations; of course, that there was no need of assigning the prerogative of declaring war to the executive rather than the legislative power, on account of the superior secrecy of the former; since, if they had no war, there would be no need of secrecy.

M. Malouet, who spoke with uncommon penetration in favour of the royal prerogative on this occasion, observed, 'that similar professions had often been made by other powers; and therefore, however much he approved of the manifesto which was proposed, he had great doubts of its being relied on by the other powers of Europe as a security for the continuation of the pacific conduct of France.' He observed, that we were informed by history, that free states were as liable to make wars of ambition as the most despotic. He asserted, that the only power in Europe who, during the present century, had made no wars but of a defensive nature, was the grand signior; that the kings of England, since the year 1688, had never begun a single war but in consequence of the declared wishes of the nation; and in some instances the inclination of the king and his ministers for the continuation of peace was reluctantly broken on account of the clamour of the merchants for war: that though it was true that the late American war was put an end to by a vote of the House of Commons, it was equally true, that it had been begun in consequence of an act of parliament to which the Ame-

ricans refused to submit. He added, that France had not entered into the late American war in obedience to the will of the king, though he was then absolute; but in consequence of the minister's being pushed to it by the general wish of the people. And, on the whole, he concluded, that it was clear, that, since the Roman republic until the moment he was speaking, free states were as fond of war as despotic ones, and subjects as eager for it as their sovereigns, very little benefit was to be expected from the proposed manifesto.

This consideration, that a disposition for war has existed in all nations and in every form of government, notwithstanding of all mankind being convinced that war is a losing game even to conquerors, inclines some people to think that man is by nature a *fighting animal*, who takes pleasure in war for its own sake. If this be the case, we need not be surprised that all the reasonings of philosophers, and all the sermons of preachers against it, have had no more effect than the same means when employed to convince men of the hurtful tendency of some of their other pleasures, and to persuade them to relinquish them.

As Mirabeau generally took the popular side of a question, and Malouet that which his understanding approved, without regarding whether it was popular or not, they were often in opposition to each other. On the occasion above mentioned, however, Mirabeau joined Malouet, assisted him against the torrent of prejudice, and with manly eloquence unfolded the mischief which he was persuaded would arise from depriving the executive power of the prerogatives of declaring war and making peace. They were, after all, obliged to acquiesce in a kind of middle plan, proposed by M. Alexander Lameth; which, after being amended by M. Freteau and M. Desmeunier, was decreed in the following words.—'Le droit de la paix et de la guerre appartient à la nation: la guerre ne pourra être decidée que par un décret du corps législatif, qui sera

rendu sur la proposition formelle et nécessaire du roi, et ensuite sanctionné par sa majesté.' *

As this decree left to the king the prerogative of announcing to the national assembly the necessity of war and peace, which could not be at all deliberated on by them until he laid it before them; and as, after the government came to be in some degree settled, it was naturally supposed that his majesty would have considerable influence on the decision of the question; those who supported the royal prerogative were not so completely defeated on this occasion as the populace imagined; who, as soon as the decree was passed, celebrated it as a victory with all their usual demonstrations of joy. Some thought the joy ridiculous, and considered those as a parcel of dupes who looked on this as a triumph.

Without examining whether the popular party had gained a victory or not, we cannot think the people were duped who rejoiced as if they had; for, as the only enjoyment which the people of any nation derive from the most indisputed victories they ever obtain consists in the exultation, illumination, and intoxication of a public rejoicing, it does not seem to be ill judged in them to secure these at all events.

Even the English people, though not so apt as the French to be thrown into transports of joy, are sensible of this, and never allow any thing that can be construed into a victory to escape without a public rejoicing. And as real victories have not occurred of late so often as could be wished, if such an account has sometimes been given of defeats that they passed for victories, and made the people rejoice, who can blame the fabricators of so benevolent a fraud?

* The right of declaring war and concluding peace belongs to the nation; war cannot be decided on but by a decree of the legislative body, in consequence of a formal and necessary proposition made to them by the king, which must be afterwards sanctioned by him

CHAPTER XX.

Preparations for the Ceremony of the Confederation—Duke of Orleans returns to Paris—Offence taken at the manner of distributing Tickets—Ceremony—Jealousy and Misunderstanding between the Officers of the Troops of the Line and the National Guards—An Insurrection at Nancy—M. de Bouillé ordered to march to that Town—Heroic Action of a young Officer—Dreadful Scene of Slaughter—Effect it produced at the Capital.

With a view to make a deep and lasting impression on the public mind, and to connect the revolution with agreeable, magnificent, and religious sentiments, a great public ceremony had been in preparation for some time. On this occasion the king, the national assembly, and the people were to take an oath to maintain the cause of liberty and the constitution, of which the chief articles were already known.

Another reason for this ceremony was, that those provinces which had enjoyed peculiar privileges were supposed to be irritated at their being deprived of them, and in hopes of having them restored provided the new division of France into departments could be overset: it was therefore thought that so remarkable a ceremony, being performed in each separate department, would mark the division with force in the minds of the people; while making them all take the oaths to maintain the constitution, of which the division into departments was an article, would render them averse to any attempt that might be made to alter that arrangement.

The 14th of July 1790, on account of its being the anniversary of the taking of the Bastile, was fixed upon for the day of this ceremony, and the extensive plain of the Champ-de-Mars for the place in which it was to be celebrated. It was thought expedient to shape the ground into an amphitheatre of such prodigious extent as should admit the multitude who were to be spectators of, or, ac-

cording to the French phrase, to assist at, the ceremony.

Expectation was wound up to a height that attracted numbers not only from the distant provinces of France, but strangers from many other countries of Europe: among others the duke of Orleans, to whom a spectacle of this kind was a matter of the first importance. The idea of being absent from such an exhibition becoming insupportable, he wrote a letter to the president, which was read in the national assembly, announcing that, the object of his mission to England being now ended, he had informed the king of his intention to return—that he had thought it proper to give the assembly the same notice—adding that, if they should not think it necessary to deliberate on the subject, he should consider that as a permission for him to return. The assembly threw their eyes on M. La Fayette; but although he had privately used means to prevent the duke from this step, he did not think proper to oppose it openly, and therefore he declared that the reasons which had rendered the duke's absence from France expedient did not any longer exist.

The partisans of the duke of Orleans had been for some time pressing him to return, and were prepared to raise an outcry if it should be resisted: the court therefore declined any contest which might be attended with more troublesome consequences than could result from the duke's presence, especially as his popularity was considerably diminished; and many believed that the eagerness he shewed for returning had no motive more profound or dangerous than his passion for seeing a fine show. No objection being made, the assembly passed to the order of the day, which was construed into a permission for his returning to Paris, and he returned accordingly.

But the formation of the amphitheatre for the confedertion being a work of immense labour, the Parisians began to be afraid, a month or three weeks previous to the 14th of July, that it would not be ready so soon. The inhabitants of Vienna or London might have been con-

soled under the apprehension of a similar misfortune by the reflection, that, if it should not be ready by the 14th of July, it would by the 14th of August: but such a consideration afforded no comfort to the Parisians; they lost all patience at the bare mention of it; it was like telling a company of children, when a feast of fruit and sweet-meats is ready to be served up to them, that they should have them on some future day. To prevent so dreadful a calamity, some of the most zealous citizens offered their gratuitous labour to accelerate the work; the applause they met with excited others to follow their example; and in a short time the same desire glowed in every breast, of both sexes, every condition, and all ages. The field of the confederation became the only place of public resort: all amusements and employments were neglected for those of wielding the spade and the pick-axe, and the most dissipated town in the world became at once the most laborious. Every district and corporation marshalled the volunteers belonging to them under their respective banners, and marched them daily to the field. Various clubs, societies, and associations, in fancy dresses suitable to the work they were to be employed in, went also in procession, preceded by musicians. Individuals in all situations in life, and of all religious persuasions, Jews as well as Christians, soldiers and priests, sailors and monks, judges and dancing-masters, bankers and beggars, poets, advocates, painters, actors, and tradesmen of every kind were seen working cordially together. There was as great a confusion of professions and trades at the forming of this same amphitheatre, as there was of tongues at the rearing of the tower of Babel, but the first, instead of preventing, promoted the work. Young women also of every denomination were daily seen tripping to the field with their gowns tucked, and belts of the national ribbon around their waists. There the lover wrought by the side of his mistress, enlivened by her smiles, and encouraged by the tune of Ca ira.

The day of such vast expectation at last arrived; the

amphitheatre was formed with the altar in the middle; the throne of the king, a magnificent pavilion, and commodious seats for the queen and royal family, and the triumphal arches through which the various processions were to pass, were finished only two hours before the processions began.

At daybreak the citizens began to flock to the amphitheatre, which, it was said, was of sufficient extent to contain above three hundred thousand.

On the preceding night some of the districts had distributed tickets of admission to the wives and daughters of the most distinguished or most favoured citizens; and no less than four thousand of the national guards were ordered on duty at the field of confederation.

This produced discontent and murmurs. It was said that all the citizens had an equal claim to a place in the amphitheatre; that those who went first had a right to their choice of every place, except such as were destined for the persons in some public office; and the guards appointed on service at the Champ-de-Mars declared, that they would not oppose the entrance of any citizen whether he had a ticket or not.

When these declarations were known, the municipality thought proper to order it to be proclaimed in the middle of the night of the 13th, that the tickets which had been distributed were entirely useless; which made great numbers resort to the amphitheatre by break of day; and the guards, instead of opposing their entrance, endeavoured to amuse them during the long interval till the ceremony should begin, by military evolutions and dancing the carmagnole on the plain.

The great procession consisted of a band of music, a body of the national guards, cavalry as well as infantry, led by M. La Fayette, and followed by the electors of the city of Paris—the principal members of the municipality —the deputies to the national assembly—the deputies from one-half of the departments into which France had been divided—a deputation from the army and fleet,

headed by two marshals of France—the deputies from the other half of the departments—and a body of horse and foot belonging to the national guards, with a band of music, closed the procession; which was rendered more splendid by the banners belonging to the various classes of which it was composed, and by the martial airs which were played in the intervals between the universal exclamation of *Vive la Nation!* which from time to time pierced the air.

The different bodies which formed the procession had particular places assigned to them. Those for the members of the national assembly were to the right and left of the king's throne.

Two hundred priests, dressed in garments of white linen bound with the national coloured ribbons, stood on the steps of the altar, which had been raised for the purpose of administering the oath, for which function the committee of the commune appointed the bishop of Autun, a man of talents, and of one of the most ancient families in France, and a zealous promoter of the revolution.

When he was about to celebrate the mass which preceded the pronunciation of the oath, the sky became obscure with clouds; a storm of wind took place, and was followed by a deluge of rain. In the brightest period of the Roman republic, this would have put an end to the ceremony; and even on the present occasion it was differently interpreted. The enemies of the revolution whispered, that it was an indication that heaven was displeased at what was going on; but others declared that, if heaven was displeased, it could only be at the number of aristocrates, who by their presence profaned the ceremony. This interpretation would have gained more credit if the aristocrates *only* had been drenched in the rain.

The bishop proceeded to the celebration of the mass without any regard to the storm; after which he pronounced a benediction on the oriflamme or royal standard of France, and on the eighty-three banners of the depart-

ments which waved around it immediately before the altar.

Considering how much pains had been taken, particularly by some of the chief promoters of the revolution, to eradicate religious sentiments from the minds of the French people, it seems surprising that so many religious acts were interwoven with this ceremony. One part of this conduct precluded the effect that seems to have been expected from the other, and was as preposterous as that monk's reasoning who, preaching on the good produced by religion in the world, said, 'Enfin, mes amis, nous venons du néant, nous rentrons dans le néant; mais la religion console de tout.'*

The king had been appointed, for that day only, supreme and absolute commander of all the national guards in France. He named M. La Fayette as his delegate to perform the functions; so that La Fayette was for this day not only commander in chief of the national guards of Paris, but high constable of all the armed men in the kingdom, which probably was a greater number than ever had been in any kingdom in the world before.

M. La Fayette, as their representative, took the oath first. When he left the bottom of the throne where he had hitherto stood, and moved towards the altar for that purpose, the trumpets began to sound; a vast band of martial music continued to play while he ascended the steps of the altar. In the view of the multitude who filled this immense circus around, he laid the point of his sword upon the bible which was on the table of the altar, and raising his other hand towards the sky, the music ceased; an universal stillness ensued; and he pronounced,—'Nous jurons d'être à jamais fidèles à la nation, à la loi, et au roi; de maintenir, de tout nôtre pouvoir, la constitution décrêtée par l'assemblée nationale, et acceptée par le roi.'† The trumpets beginning to sound

* In short, my friends, we come from nothing; we are to return to annihilation; but religion is a comfort in all cases.

† We swear to be ever faithful to the nation, to the law, and to the king;

as soon as he had finished, were drowned in the acclamation of *Vive la Nation!*

All the members of the national assembly then standing up, the president pronounced the oath in his own name and that of his brethren; which was in like manner followed by music and acclamation.

When the king himself arose, a great body of the national guards pressed near the throne, which they surrounded with raised arms, while he repeated, 'Moi, roi des François, je jure d'employer tout le pouvoir qui m'est délégué par la loi constitutionelle de l'etat, à maintenir la constitution décrêtée par l'assemblée nationale et acceptée par moi, et à faire exécuter les loix.' *

A signal being given that the king had taken the oath, the air resounded with alternate peals of artillery and shouts of the people; and thus ended a ceremony which, notwithstanding the good intentions of many who took the oath, has been considered as the grandest and most extensive act of perjury that heaven and earth was ever witness to.

The rain prevented the king from leaving the throne and walking to the altar, where it was expected he would have taken the oath. This circumstance was afterwards mentioned in the seditious groups in the Palais Royal, and at the jacobin society, as a proof of the king's aversion to the constitution, and his unwillingness to take the oath; but only proves, what a variety of circumstances indeed demonstrated in the progress of the revolution, that there was a disposition to calumniate the king, and pervert the most innocent and most natural parts of his behaviour into crimes.

It will readily be believed that the new order of things was not generally relished by the officers of the army.

king; to maintain, to the utmost of our power, the constitution decreed by the national assembly and accepted by the king.

* I, king of the French, swear to employ all the power that is consigned to me by the constitutional law of the state, in maintaining the constitution which has been decreed by the national assembly, and accepted by me; and I swear to put the laws in execution.

Most of them were prejudiced against the constitution, as noblesse; and, as soldiers, the formation of the national guards, and seeing men of different, and in their estimation far inferior professions, affecting the strut, assuming the command, and exacting the respect due to officers of the army, was to them highly mortifying.

The insulting vivacity of some young officers who attempted to ridicule the air of those of the national guards, occasioned frequent quarrels and sometimes duels, in which the latter proved, that, if they were not equal to the former in smartness of air and appearance, they were however on a footing with them in point of courage.

This discovery diminished the quarrels and the number of duels, but did not entirely remove the prejudice which the ancient military officers had against these new national troops.

The same spirit did not actuate the common soldiers of the army. Great pains had been taken from the beginning of the revolution to conciliate their minds to the new constitution. Those pains were not taken in vain. The soldiers were as well pleased with the appellation of citizen as their officers were averse to be put on a level with the officers of the national guards: they soon became a little intoxicated with the attention paid to them, and they daily acquired ideas inconsistent with the regularity and subordination which become soldiers. The officers of course endeavoured to correct this tendency to licentiousness by every means they could devise: among others they tried to alienate their minds from the new system, as degrading to them as soldiers: they endeavoured to keep them from mixing with the national guards, to introduce a stricter discipline, and severer punishments, and gave the men to understand that this severity was in conformity with orders from the national assembly.

Such a spirit of discontent appeared in various divisions of the army in different parts of the kingdom, that Mirabeau, in conformity with that decisive conduct which his genius always prompted on great and perilous occasions,

proposed that the army should be entirely disbanded, and a new one levied and organized, on the principles of the constitution. Terrified at the boldness of this measure, the assembly rejected it as rash and inexpedient.

In no town belonging to France were the opinions of the inhabitants respecting the revolution in more violent opposition to each other than at Nancy, the capital of Lorrain.

The noblesse of this place were all averse to the revolution, the bourgeoisie favoured it. The regiments which formed the garrison were partly French and partly Swiss. The soldiers were taught by the citizens to consider their officers as aristocrates, as men who oppressed them, and who defrauded them of the arrears that were due. Pamphlets stating the grievances under which the soldiers laboured, and informing them of claims which they had a right to make, were distributed among the regiments. By these means the men were at length excited to make a formal demand of certain sums which they asserted had been long due to them; the commanding officer refused the demand, and threatened those who made it with punishment; on which the men broke out into open insurrection, seized the military chest, and sent a deputation from the different regiments to Paris to state the injustice which they said had been done, and demand redress.

But a statement of the transactions had been previously made by the commander and other officers of the garrison, which arrived at Paris, and was delivered to the minister of war, who gave such an account of the matter to M. Bailly the mayor, as induced him to grant an order for arresting the deputies from the soldiers as soon as they arrived.

In consequence of a representation made to the national assembly by M. de la Tour du Pin, at that time minister of war, which stated the mutinous lengths to which the garrison of Nancy had proceeded, and the dangerous example they gave to the army, the assembly passed a

decree ordering the marquis de Bouillé, who was commander in chief of the troops at Metz and on all that frontier, to march with a proper force to Nancy, and to suppress the insurgents.

M. de Bouillé executed his orders with the intelligence of an experienced officer who knows the importance of promptitude in military manœuvres, particularly such as are directed against a mischief so apt to increase by delay as mutiny.

He arrived much sooner than was expected before Nancy, with an army composed of national guards as well as troops of the line.

He immediately sent information that he came in obedience to a decree of the national assembly sanctioned by the king, to re-establish order in the town of Nancy—that as a proof of their submission, he exacted that Messrs. Malseigne and De Noue, two general officers whom the insurgents had thrown into prison, should be directly set at liberty and sent to him—that four of the most criminal of each of the revolting regiments should be delivered up to him, that they might be sent under a guard to the national assembly to be judged by them—and that the garrison should immediately evacuate the town, and wait his orders at a certain meadow near it.

There was some appearance at first that those conditions would be submitted to. MM. de Malseigne and de Noue, after a considerable dispute among the mutineers, during which both the gentlemen ran a great risk of being killed, arrived safe at M. de Bouillé's army.

But when the advanced guard were about to enter the town, the soldiers of the garrison who were stationed at the gate, suspecting that they were betrayed, obstinately refused to obey those who had agreed to accept of the conditions; on which they were joined by many who had previously consented to submit. Some of the garrison who wished to retire were prevented by those who had resolved to resist; and who, when summoned to submit by the troops now within thirty yards of the gate, answered

with threats, and prepared to fire a cannon charged with grape-shot upon the assailants.

A young officer of the name of Désilles, who belonged to the régiment du roi, had been extremely active in his endeavours to persuade them to submission. This young man, being shocked at the idea of that scene of bloodshed which was about to commence, and inspired by heroic enthusiasm, threw himself before the mouth of the cannon as they were applying the match, exclaiming,—'Stop, for heaven's sake! Those are your friends, your brethren, whom you are going to destroy; they are sent by the national assembly; shall the king's regiment be dishonoured?' This prevented the immediate firing of the piece. Two persons, deputed by M. Bouillé, threw their arms around his neck, and joined their efforts with his to prevent the commencement of hostilities.

These deputies entered the town, carrying young Désilles with them; the troops of the garrison and those of M. de Bouillé remaining in awful inactivity, regarding each other with threatening looks till the effect of the message brought by the deputies should be known.

Instead of being agreed to, the terms offered were rejected; the deputies were insulted and abused by the furious council to which they were presented. When the young Désilles saw this, he rushed again between the mutineers and the advanced guard, and fell pierced by several musket-shot, while he was entreating both parties to abstain from mutual slaughter.

The cannon charged with grape was immediately fired, accompanied with a discharge of musketry, which killed three officers and a considerable number of M. de Bouillé's troops; others advancing forced the gate and entered the town. Many of them were killed from the windows. The insurgents, however, were driven from house to house; and a dreadful scene of carnage ensued. Three hundred were killed or wounded; four hundred were made prisoners with arms in their hands; the rest laid down their arms, and submitted to the orders of M. de

Bouillé, who sent them under escorts to different garrisons.

The first accounts of these transactions occasioned amazement and sorrow at Paris. Those sensations were, by the industry of the seditious, soon converted into rage against M. de Bouillé; though, had he been less alert, and had the mutiny gained vigour in consequence of his inactivity, the same persons would in all probability have raised an outcry against him for not doing that which they now blamed him for having done.

Whatever regret the national assembly might feel at the result of this affair, they were not so much affected by it, nor by the rage of the populace, as to be prevented from publicly approving the conduct of a man who had obeyed their orders with greater expedition and efficacy than they had reason to expect. They voted the thanks of the assembly to M. de Bouillé and the troops which served under him.

This vote, however, did not diminish the rage of the Parisian populace, who loudly exclaimed against M. de Bouillé for having shed so much blood, as they said, unnecessarily. Vast numbers assembled in the Palais Royal, from whence they went, and, surrounding the hall of the national assembly, demanded his head, and the dismission of the ministers, whom they accused of having by misrepresentations betrayed the assembly into the fatal decree under which he had acted.

This spirit of sedition seemed to augment every moment, and would probably have produced very dreadful effects, had it not been for the steady conduct of M La Fayette and the national guards acting under his orders.

CHAPTER XXI.

M. Necker retires—Reflections on that Event—Inveteracy of the French against Ministers of State and Ecclesiastics—Long Habit more necessary to acquire Excellence in bodily than in mental Exertions—The National Assembly insists that the King shall sanction their Decree, obliging the Clergy to take the Oath to the Constitution—The Pope disapproves of it—The Effect this has on the Minds of the People—The King's Aunts determine to leave France and go to Rome.

M. Necker, who had for some time seen the decline of his popularity, and had already received several mortifying proofs that his influence in the national assembly was greatly diminished, became alarmed for his personal safety; for in the popular outcry against the ministers, no exception was made in his favour. He thought proper, therefore, to send a letter with his resignation to the assembly, on the pretext that his health required retreat and country air. Immediately after it was read, several members called for the order of the day; which is usually done when the matter actually under consideration is thought unworthy of their attention.

M. Necker had lent above two millions of livres to the public treasury, which his friends had often advised him to withdraw and place in greater security; but he had always refused; and, on his leaving Paris, he declared that he had left that sum, with his hotel and furniture, as pledges for the faithfulness of his administration.

Several of the sections of Paris actually assembled, on purpose to determine whether or not he ought to be permitted to leave the kingdom before his accounts were examined and approved; for he had now so entirely lost his popularity, that those very Parisians who a few months before had considered him as the guardian angel of France, now questioned whether all the fortune which he left behind would indemnify the nation for the money of which he had defrauded it. But Mirabeau, Camus, and

others, who were fully convinced of M. Necker's integrity, and, sufficiently sensible of the mutability of public opinion, had long wished him out of France, interposed with the sections, and prevented any opposition from being made to his departure.

The calumnies of M. Necker's enemies were not confined to Paris: they were circulated all over France. He had not proceeded on his journey above forty leagues until he was stopped by the municipal officers of a small town. They disregarded his passports, and still more a particular letter from the king which he also shewed them. They insisted that he should remain where he was until they received instructions from the national assembly. He and Madame Necker were accordingly guarded like state prisoners, until two deputies from the municipality returned from Paris with the permission of the assembly for their being set at liberty.

Before they were out of France they were again stopped, not by the magistrates but by the populace of Vesoul, who, after a number of insults, examining their papers and every article in their trunks, and detaining them several hours in the dread of some greater violence, reluctantly allowed them to proceed on the journey at last, although they could find nothing on which to found a pretext for detaining them.

In this manner was M. Necker obliged to fly from the country, where he had but a few months before been almost adored—a man whose exile a short time before had excited universal regret; who, although a Protestant and a foreigner, had enjoyed the confidence of the nation more than any Roman Catholic minister, who was also a native, ever had done: and, what makes the capricious fickleness of the French appear in a stronger point of view, is, that no change of system or political conduct on the part of M. Necker occasioned this sudden alteration of their opinion. Neither his fidelity nor his diligence was ever called in question; and there is strong reason for believing that his earnest wish and supreme ambition

were to arrange the finances of France; to establish a government free from the tyranny of the old one, and which should guard with impartiality the liberties of the people and the dignity of the crown. The great error into which both he and the nation fell, but for which he was more excusable than the nation, was imagining that he had genius and talents to accomplish such an undertaking: for, however strange it may seem, nothing is more certain than that the public over-rated M. Necker's abilities as much as he himself did. But so many of mankind think highly of themselves without any other mortal to keep them in countenance, that the man who has an exalted notion of his own abilities, knowing that the world in general are of the same way of thinking, may be excused, although both he and the world are mistaken. M. Necker is accused of being ostentatious and vain; but if a man maintains perfect integrity towards the public, is benevolent towards individuals, fulfils the relative duties of life conscientiously, and strives to be useful to mankind, is it not ungenerous to insist so much on his vanity? Would it not be fortunate for mankind, if many more of them had the same kind of vanity?

The uprightness of men's intentions seldom saves them from the enmity of those who think they have suffered by their measures. M. Necker has been abused by one party in France for attempting any alteration whatever in the government; and by another, for not pushing reformation much farther than he did; and that nation in general, after having ranked him among their ablest politicians and greatest ministers, seem now to consider him as little above the level of common bankers or comptrollers of finance.

It has been often observed, that great occasions and hazardous situations have a tendency to create and develop talents; and of course that times of revolution and important struggles in states are the most productive of great men. It is asserted by some, however, that this French revolution forms a contradiction to the general

observation respecting the tendency of revolutions, ina much as, although it has occasioned a long and seve struggle, and given rise to very great crimes, yet it h not produced one man who can be with propriety call *great*, even allowing that wickedness did not preclu from the title.

Without entering into that discussion, it must be a knowledged that, if the French revolution has not giv rise to any great men, it has had an effect more extraord nary and unexpected; having entirely overset and ann hilated the greatness of more men than any other revol tion ever did. To enumerate instances would be equal superfluous and invidious; as, without including the gre men of France itself whom the revolution has convert into little men, the recollection of every reader at all a quainted with the modern history of Europe, must furni instances of generals as well as of statesmen, who we supposed to have secured ample and conspicuous places the gallery of fame, but whose greatness has dwindled wonderfully in the course of this revolution, that it is nc generally believed they will be exhibited only as mini tures. So that, in the loss of the admiration he at o time possessed, M. Necker has many fellow-sufferers.

Except the clergy, no set of men have been treated wi so much severity by the French since the revolution their ministers of state. It would seem as if that peop had conceived a rancour against all who presumed to g vern either their souls or bodies. In this, as in mar other particulars, their conduct is the reverse of the En lish, who have always behaved to their clergy with t respect due to their characters and sacred functions; ha on all occasions heaped riches and honours on tho statesmen, whose fortunate or wise administration h rendered the country prosperous; and in many instanc have behaved to those who from negligence or error ha involved it in distress, with a degree of patience and fo bearance which astonishes all other nations.

M. La Tour du Pin was obliged to resign soon aft

the retreat of M. Necker. His example was followed by all his colleagues in administration, except M. de Montmorin. M. Delessart, the disciple and friend of M. Necker, was joined to M. de Montmorin as part of the new administration. Both were men of principle, though neither were popular; and both afterwards were the victims of popular rage and cruelty: M. Delessart, with the prisoners from Orleans who were slaughtered at Versailles without having ever had any trial; M. de Montmorin at Paris, after he had been tried and acquitted.

Nothing is a more general subject of ridicule than for people who have not been bred to a particular profession to presume to have knowledge in it, or to hold opinions contrary to those of men of the profession who are supposed to have studied the subject. The folly of this is pretty universally allowed when the case is stated in general; but it is astonishing what a number think themselves individually exceptions to the general rule, and make no scruple of disputing with a physician on medicine, with a barrister on law, or even with a clergyman on divinity; while they laugh at any other person who like themselves has not been educated to those professions for doing the same. The maxim, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*, seems more just, however, when applied to such professions as require mechanical exertion only, than when applied to such as require exertions of the mind: for long habit is more necessary for the attainment of excellence in the mechanical arts, than in those which depend on the power and extent of the understanding. A man, however ingenious, who would attempt to make a common chair without having been bred a carpenter, would certainly succeed much worse than one accustomed to the trade, though far his inferior in ingenuity; because the power of using the fingers and applying the tools with dexterity is to be acquired by frequent use and long habit only. The experience of every person who can write is a strong proof of this; and though a man has been making use of his fingers all his life, and can do it with

dexterity to some particular purposes, yet when he applies them to a purpose he never before attempted, he will do it clumsily until he has rendered them pliable and obedient to his intention by habit. But the mind is more flexible than the muscles. A man who has been in the habit of reflecting and reasoning all his life will reason better, even on a new subject, than another of a narrower understanding who has been accustomed to investigate it. Few things are supposed to require a greater number of talents, and more strength of understanding, than the art of commanding an army and conducting a campaign; yet the late American war and the present war with France in a still more striking manner demonstrate, that it is not absolutely necessary to be bred to the military profession to enable men of great natural acuteness and strong understanding to excel in it.

The business of a statesman is thought, above all others, to require superior talents and much experience; yet the first have been found to succeed without the second. Instances might be given of the affairs of a great nation being conducted for a series of years in the most prosperous manner by men of little or no experience, and whose measures were not rendered more prosperous by experience when it was acquired. From the behaviour of the French at this time, a man might have been led to infer that it really was their opinion that experience was rather detrimental to a statesman; for the members of the national assembly who had least experience in affairs of state were convinced that they could govern the country better than the ministers; and the coffeehouse orators, the groups of the Palais Royal, and people in the tribunes, who had no experience at all, seemed fully persuaded that they could form better decrees than the members of the national assembly, who had had the experience of two years. The severe decrees which the assembly passed against the clergy, however, were so far from being of the number of those which displeased the people, that they were the most approved of; and it must

seem surprising that a class of men, distinguished for their power over the minds of the people, should have lost it so completely at a period when it was so much their interest to retain it. In vain did the moderate part of the national assembly represent those decrees as unjust; and in vain did some insinuate that they were impious.

The violent harangues of those who were inveterate enemies of the clergy, made more impression on the minds of the populace than all the remonstrances of the others; which was probably owing to the small hold that religious sentiments had on the minds of a certain portion of the people; from another portion considering the cause of religion and the pecuniary interest of the clergy as unconnected; and, thirdly, from the demagogues representing that by the decrees in question the people would reap immediate benefit; whereas the benefits which the clergy held forth to them as the consequence of opposing those decrees, were to be reaped at a distant period and in another world.

It had been enacted in July 1790, that every beneficed clergyman should take a solemn oath to be faithful to the nation, the law, the king, and to maintain the new constitution, particularly those decrees which regarded ecclesiastics. This regulation, however, had not been strongly enforced, and was in a short time almost entirely neglected; but when the clergy were universally accused of counter-revolutionary practices, it was resolved that this decree should be executed with rigour all over the kingdom; and that those who refused or neglected to take the oath should be ejected from their benefices, and suffer other penalties.

It would have been more prudent as well as more equitable to have appointed no penalty or punishment, except to such as actually excited the people to insurrection. The exacting such an oath unquestionably was persecution; and it produced the effect which persecution never fails to produce: it roused the spirit of enthusiastic re-

sistance. Several ecclesiastics who would have submitted to the constitution, and refrained from any active part against it, could not prevail on themselves to take this oath. Some who would have had no scruple in taking it from any conscientious or pious motive, refused; because they could not bear the idea of passing for base-minded time-servers, which they imagined they should be deemed, if they took it in the present circumstances. Many waited till they should be informed of the pope's decision before they determined whether they should take or refuse the oath. The king himself had delayed to sanction this severe decree till he should know his holiness's approbation; which Cardinal Bernis, the king's ambassador at Rome, was instructed to apply for.

This was a requisition which it cannot be thought the ambassador would be very eager to urge, or the pope very prompt to grant, in the manner expected by the national assembly.

In the meanwhile, as the disturbances in the provinces augmented, and were generally imputed to the manœuvres of the clergy, the national assembly appointed that their president should wait on the king, and require his reasons in writing, signed by himself and countersigned by the minister, of the delay in sanctioning the decree: on which the king thought proper to sanction the decree without waiting for the approbation of his holiness; and at the same time he wrote a very complaisant letter to the assembly, in which he declares that his only reason for having delayed sanctioning this decree against the clergy was, an earnest wish that some less severe measure could have been devised; and that he agreed to it then, in the hopes that his shewing the world that he and the national assembly were of the same sentiments would preclude future resistance to the decree, and quiet the agitation of people's minds on that subject.

It is evident, however, from this very answer, that the king and national assembly were not precisely of the same sentiments.

The pope soon afterwards declared his disapprobation of the oath; which determined many of the clergy to refuse it who had remained until then in suspense; but did not prevent all those who refused the oath from being ejected from their benefices, and others appointed in their stead.

As the oath was considered by some as perjury, being in their opinion a breach of that which they had taken at their ordination; and as the pope had now declared his positive disapprobation of it, a refusal of it by Roman Catholic clergy, in a Roman Catholic country, could not, in candour, be construed into a proof of a seditious spirit, or of rebellious designs against the existing government; and therefore the cruelty and injustice of depriving them of their livings for refusing it appears in a striking light; particularly as some of the clergy offered to overleap other difficulties, and take the oath, provided it should not be construed so as to imply their admission of any spiritual authority in the assembly. But even this salvo was refused to them.

The enforcing of this decree was a source of unhappiness not only to the excluded clergy but likewise to the most pious of the people, whose consciences did not permit them to receive the sacrament at the hands of priests whom they thought unworthy of administering it; for the pope's interdiction, which was treated with contempt by the licentious populace of Paris, was viewed in a very serious light by the sober and superstitious peasantry of the provinces. When it was urged to one of them that he ought to have no scruple at receiving the sacrament from a priest who had taken the oath, since the king himself had sanctioned the decree,—'My body,' said the peasant, 'belongs to the king; but my soul belongs to the pope.'

In the full persuasion that so valuable a part of his property was at the pope's disposal, it is not surprising that this poor man was cautious of doing what his holiness disapproved of. But, laudable as this peasant's con-

duct was, what is recorded of another is still more praiseworthy, and infinitely more disinterested. One of his neighbours having reproached him for having had his child baptized by a priest just established in the parish, who had taken the oath, instead of applying to the former curé who had been ejected: 'Why, my child seemed very weakly,' replied the peasant; 'and I was so much afraid of its dying without baptism, that I took the first priest I could get to secure the poor infant's soul at all events.'—'But after what the pope has declared,' said his neighbour, 'does not your own soul run some risk, for having employed one of those impious priests who disobey his holiness?'—'I have time to repent and get absolution,' rejoined the peasant; 'whereas my poor innocent babe was in danger of slipping off in an instant without baptism or any chance of salvation.'*

The view of the national assembly in enforcing the oath, and in ejecting from their benefices all who refused it, no doubt was to deprive those persons of the government of the church who were disaffected to the revolution, and to place it in the hands of men who could have no hopes of retaining their situation but by supporting it. Nevertheless it seemed impolitic to strike at the whole body of the clergy at once, and so unite in one common cause four distinct sets of men who acted on very different principles from each other, namely, those who objected to the oath from motives of pure piety; those who objected, from strict notions of church authority; those who, without having much regard for either, had a persuasion that the government would soon be restored to its ancient channel; and, fourthly, those who had a repugnance from taking the oath, merely because they knew it would be imputed to mean and interested motives.

Of one hundred and thirty-one bishops, two or three

* Before the revolution it was a received opinion even among the populace, that the ceremony of baptism is valid although performed by a heretic; but at this period some of the peasantry were made to believe that to employ a priest who had taken the oaths was a mortal sin.

only were prevailed on to conform to the decree of the assembly, and preserve their bishopricks at the expense of taking the oath. All the rest were ejected from their benefices.

So striking an act of severity against a body of men of such importance, and of an order who have had the most powerful influence on the minds of the people, might have been dreaded by any government, but particularly by one so loose and unsettled as that of France at this time.

The sending of five bishops to the Tower in the year 1688 shocked the English nation to such a degree, that it facilitated the revolution, and prepared the minds of the people for the exclusion of King James, which followed soon after. That infatuated monarch, it is true, raised the spirit of the people against him not only by attacking *their* religion, but also by endeavouring to force upon them another religion which they detested; and the last perhaps created full as much indignation as the former.

This is an error of which the leaders of the French revolution cannot be accused; for, although all of them have in some degree contributed to weaken the national attachment to their old religion, none of them have taken pains to introduce a new one. Yet after all that has been so triumphantly declaimed and written by them against their bishops and priests and monks, and the religion which they taught, it does not appear that the minds of the people are much enlightened, their manners more amiable, or the national character greatly improved by the abolition of all those abettors of ignorance and error.

The king's two aunts, the only remaining daughters of Lewis XV, now considerably advanced in life, had been long distressed at the innovations of which they had already been witnesses, and alarmed at the thoughts of others which they dreaded. Notwithstanding their having been bred in a licentious court, and witnesses of the profligate life of their father, they both entertained strong sentiments of devotion. Lewis XV himself had been a constant attender on public worship, assiduous in private acts of de-

votion, and a sincere believer in Christianity; all that he wished to compound for was the privilege of infringing its precepts; and that only during those periods in which he was in good health; for it appears that when he was ill at Metz, and at other intervals of severe indisposition, he was prevailed upon by his confessor to dismiss his mistress, and, notwithstanding his high rank, to live in the same degree of temperance and self-denial that could have been expected from any common sick person; so that, on the whole, he considered himself as a tolerably good Christian. The princesses, who could not alter the conduct of their father, had always lamented it, and practised the precepts of the religion in which he only believed. They were now excessively shocked at the cruelty with which the ministers of religion were treated, and that universal disregard of all religion which prevailed in France; but when they understood that his holiness had openly declared against the oath which the national assembly were enforcing, they began to think that not their lives only, but also their salvation, would be in danger by their remaining in a country where such impiety was tolerated. They therefore informed the king that they intended to leave France, and go to Rome, where under the pope's protection they might be peaceably allowed to exercise the duties, and enjoy the consolations of their religion. The king endeavoured to dissuade them from this journey; but did not think it proper to put any constraint upon them when he found that they persisted in their intention.

The populace of Paris were not so indulgent as the king. They now thought that they had a right to interfere in all state affairs, and also to consider whatever they pleased as an affair of state. A numerous deputation from that body of females known by the name of Dames de la Halle, waited on the princesses at Bellevue; and, in the expectation that they would obtain what had been refused to the king, communicated to them the reasons which in their opinion ought to determine the princesses not to quit

the kingdom. This deputation probably hastened the departure of the princesses, who set out on their journey very soon afterwards.

This was no sooner known at Paris than it excited a commotion far greater than could have been naturally expected from the occasion.

A rumour having been spread that *monsieur* the king's brother, and his princess, intended to follow his aunts, a multitude assembled at the palace of the Luxembourg to entreat him to stay. He thought it expedient to appear among them, and assure them that he had no intention of leaving Paris; adding, that he never would quit his fellow-citizens: from which it may be concluded, that he did not consider the inhabitants of Paris as his fellow-citizens; for he secretly quitted them sometime after, and has not returned to them since.

When the two princesses arrived at Moret, the municipality of that place thought it improper to allow them to proceed any farther until a deputation should be sent to Paris, to know whether or not their journey was approved of by the national assembly.

The princesses would have been obliged to remain at Moret till the return of this deputation, had not a detachment of hussars which arrived about the same time thought that they had as good a right to decide on this subject as the municipality of Moret; and they determined that the princesses should be allowed to go when they pleased. The princesses proceeded accordingly. But when they arrived at Arnay-le-Duc, the municipality of that place were of the same opinion with that of Moret; and the unfortunate ladies were under the necessity of remaining there until the national assembly should be consulted. The ambassadors from Arnay-le-Duc came to the bar of the national assembly at a time when, as it would appear, the members were much in the humour of debating, and greatly at a loss for a subject. After a warm discussion of many hours, it was finally decreed, that the two old ladies

might continue their journey to Rome without farther molestation.

CHAPTER XXII.

Death and Character of Mirabeau—Insurrection of the Populace of Paris—Chevaliers du Poignard—The Royal Family stopped as they were going to St. Cloud—Reflections—Excessive Insolence of the Rabble—Société—Fraternelle—Libels.

About this time Mirabeau died. He had been prevented from appearing in the national assembly for some time by a sudden decline of his bodily strength; but his mind, retaining its vigour to the last, was occupied during his confinement on the public concerns. Even on his death-bed he dictated his thoughts on a subject then under discussion by the assembly. What he had dictated was read to the assembly by the bishop of Autun on the very day that the death of Mirabeau was announced.

The excesses in which he had indulged overcame the force of a very vigorous constitution, and brought him to his grave at the age of forty-two.

His mind was vigorous, comprehensive, and acute. With the quickness of thought, variety of knowledge, and happiness of expression which constitutes eloquence, he also possessed that power of voice which is necessary to give it full effect in a numerous assembly. To a talent for repartee he joined the powers of profound reasoning: so that he was equally prepared to disconcert his opponent with sarcasm, or to refute him by the force of argument.

Although his features were harsh and his person clumsy, he had the art of rendering himself agreeable to women —an art which he too often used to libertine purposes, and as it is asserted, with greater success than many whose intentions were equally profligate, and their persons better formed for seduction.

His excessive love of pleasure would have tended to

render him completely dissipated, and of course left him ignorant, had he not employed the long intervals of confinement and retirement that his debauches and his want of money obliged him to, in studies which, with better health and more riches, he would have neglected.

Had he become an early favourite at court, and been placed in those high and lucrative situations that his birth and talents gave him a claim to, he might have been satisfied to have remained a mere courtier, and supporter of that oppressive and arbitrary system, against which he inveighed so violently and which he attacked with such energy. His tedious imprisonments and the hardships he suffered, sometimes in consequence of his own irregularities, and sometimes from the tyranny of others, inspired him with sympathy for the oppressed, hatred against lettres de cachet, an unconquerable aversion to tyranny, and a fervent desire of establishing freedom in his native country.

As Mirabeau was a man of violent passions, he was on some occasions carried by his resentment to oppose the measures of the ministers which his judgment approved; and on other occasions there is reason to believe that he accepted of considerable sums from the court to support measures in the national assembly, which, independent of that circumstance, he would have supported as agreeable to his own political principles. The question on the king's absolute veto—for the ministers being members of the national assembly—and some others, in favour of which he spoke with great ability, and at the risk of his popularity, were of this nature. This conduct was no doubt highly unbecoming, and gives some ground for the idea which many entertain, that he was as corrupt in politics as profligate in private life. It does not appear, however, that he ever lent his aid to any public measure inconsistent with his own ideas of liberty, and his avowed love of a monarchical form of government limited by law.'*

* It is recorded of the famous Marshal Turenne, that when he commanded the French army in Germany, deputies from a certain town came

Mirabeau has been represented in the blackest and most disgusting colours; but these accounts are to be received with caution and reserve; for, as few men have ever united in their character so many of those qualities which are apt to create enmity, so few men ever had so many enemies. As an active agent in bringing on the revolution, he was hated by all the friends of the old system of government. As a friend to monarchy, he was disliked by those who wished to have a republican form of government in France. As an avowed freethinker, he shocked the pious, and was traduced by the hypocritical. As a man of wit, he was dreaded and detested by the dull; and as his talents for conducting a popular assembly were unequalled, he was an object of envy to all who aspired to be leaders in the revolution.

His death was an irreparable loss to the royal family; for there is reason to think, that, had he lived, those who have since his death figured as principals in the revolution would have acted very subordinate parts. His superior talents and address would have given such energy to the first movements of the new constitution as would have precluded the attempts of the republicans against it on the one hand, and those of the abettors of the old government on the other. The friends of limited monarchy would have united; the wisest of the courtiers would have remained contented with the degree of power left in the king's hands; the democrates would have been satisfied with the share of democracy which belonged to the constitution; many of the Gironde party would have rallied under Mirabeau; such wretches as Hebert and Chau-

to his camp, and offered him an hundred thousand crowns, on condition that he would not march his army through their territory. 'As your town is not on the route which I intend to take,' said he, 'I cannot in conscience accept the money you offer.'

Mirabeau in the same situation would certainly not have acted in the disinterested and dignified manner that Marshal Turenne did; nor will his general character bear a comparison with that of the marshal; yet I question if Mirabeau would, in obedience to the orders of Lewis XIV, have ravaged and ruined the Palatinate.

mette would never have been heard of; Marat would have been condemned and executed; and Robespierre would never have had it in his power to commit those crimes which have deluged France with blood, shocked all Europe, and disgraced human nature. Mirabeau himself imagined, that he could have preserved the constitution; but he foresaw its destruction in his death; and a little before he expired, he predicted that the French monarchy would not survive him long.

Whatever enmity had existed against Mirabeau among the leaders of the different factions during his life, all seemed disposed to pay public honours to his memory after his death. Those demanded by the various sections, and decreed by the national assembly, with the magnificence of his funeral, are proofs of this. As for the attachment of the Parisian populace, it does him little honour, since they shewed the same, or greater, to so very despicable a being as Marat.

The importance of the audience who occupied the galleries of the national assembly, and of the populace of Paris, increased more rapidly after the death of Mirabeau than it had done before; and although he was one of those who had wished the assembly to be removed from Versailles to Paris, yet, if he had lived, he would have had reason to regret that the measure had been adopted; for, although Mirabeau had greater talents than any of his cotemporaries for guiding a popular assembly such as that of the convention, men far inferior to him, the Heberts and Chaumettes, and particularly the Marats, were better qualified for exciting the furious unthinking rabble.

It is impossible to unfold the motives of every insurrection which occurred during the revolution. Some which were begun in consequence of a premeditated plan failed and came to nothing, from the error or weakness of the conductors. Some arose from mere accident, independent of any formed scheme, and became formidable from being thought the result of profound design and extensive conspiracy.

A rumour prevailed that the castle of Vincennes was intended to replace the Bastile; that arms and ammunition had been secretly conveyed thither; and that it deserved destruction just as much as its brother, whose Gothic brows had for so many years frowned over the suburbs of St. Antoine. Whether this idea originated in the brains of the rabble from no other motive than their inherent taste for confusion and mischief, or was suggested by men who had some view in it which afterwards failed, is uncertain; but on the 28th of February a large body of men set out from that patriotic suburb, with the avowed intention of destroying the castle of Vincennes.

The mayor of Vincennes, having had notice of this, demanded assistance; and a detachment of national guards, consisting of cavalry and infantry, were immediately sent, and drawn up for the protection of the castle. But those who were bent on its destruction were at pains to persuade the national troops, that no castle was more worthy of entire demolition; that it would be disgraceful for them to attempt to prevent it. By dint of these remonstrances, the national guards became more disposed to assist than to repel the demolishers.

M. La Fayette having heard that the work of destruction was begun, and the troops passive, repaired to Vincennes, expostulated with the soldiers, and brought them to a sense of their duty.

He then ordered them to attack the rabble without firing on them. Sixty were seized, and the rest dispersed. Many of them ran to the fauxbourg St. Antoine to excite the populace to release the prisoners. The general being told that it would be dangerous to march through that quarter of Paris, as the people were in insurrection, placed the prisoners in the middle, some field-pieces in front, and marched his troops, with some municipal officers at the head of the column, directly through the suburbs to the town-house; and while the mob insulted his troops with their exclamations, and even wounded one of his aides-de-camp and some of the soldiers by throwing stones,

he lodged the prisoners in the Conciergerie without farther bloodshed.

That very morning a man had been observed loitering in the palace of the Tuilleries near the king's apartment, which had roused the suspicions of some of the attendants, who had him seized and carried before the mayor. This occasioned a great deal of noise, and, as usual, was exaggerated with many circumstances unfounded in truth: among others, that concealed weapons had been found on him, particularly a dagger or poniard of uncommon and rancorous construction.

When this person had been represented all over Paris as a desperate assassin, and the dreadful make of his poniard described by many who pretended they had seen it, his examination before the mayor rendered it evident that he was a gentleman of an excellent character, called M. Court de la Tonnelle, who had business with some one belonging to the palace, where he had frequently been; and that his concealed poniard was a couteau de chasse, much in fashion, which he wore *openly* hanging from his belt. This account of the matter travelled very slowly in comparison of the other; and did not prevent a number of gentlemen from immediately repairing to the Tuilleries, armed with swords and pistols; all declaring, that, having heard that his majesty's life was in danger, they came with the loyal resolution of exposing their own lives in defence of his.

When M. La Fayette returned from his expedition to Vincennes, he was informed that there had been a great disturbance at the Tuilleries, and that the apartments were filled with several hundred armed men, who had been admitted, at a private door, by the first gentleman of the king's bedchamber, and unknown to the national guards on duty at the palace.

The general expressed his disapprobation of this measure in sharp terms, declaring that he could not be answerable for the king's safety, if any thing similar happened again. The king himself is said to have blamed

the indiscreet zeal of those gentlemen: and, to satisfy the national guards, who were peculiarly irritated at men who pretended to interfere with them in a point which was their particular business, he permitted that the intruders should be disarmed and dismissed.

This ceremony was performed a little roughly by the national guards—to the great displeasure of many, who thought such treatment an ungrateful return for the zeal the gentlemen had manifested; while others asserted that this pretended zeal was a mere affectation of loyalty, when the danger, if ever there had been any, must have been known to be passed; and as some of those volunteers were unknown to the noblesse themselves, or known to be roturiers, they were considered by them as highly impertinent, in displaying an attachment to the king's person which their birth gave them no right to—like the poor woman who, when the famous duchess of Longueville, sister to the great Condé, was dangerously ill, came bathed in tears, and with every mark of sorrow begged to know how the duchess did; but the duchess's favourite maid, being filled with indignation at the presumptuous grief of the woman, thrust her out of doors, telling her, 'that it was the height of assurance in a low creature like her to be afflicted, or at all concerned, for the ill-health of a princess.'

In permitting those to be disarmed who had hastened to the palace on the first rumour of an assassin having been discovered, it is evident that the king yielded to what he could not prevent; for, whether their assembling in the palace was indiscreet or not, their intention apparently was to be of service to him; and it was only to spare their delicacy, and to prevent their refusing to deliver up their arms at the requisition of the national guards, and the mischief which must have ensued, that the king had interfered, and desired the arms to be delivered up, which was done on the assurance of their being afterwards restored to the owners—notwithstanding which, some of the swords were broken in the king's

sight: and this assembling at the palace was so maliciously misrepresented, that it became dangerous in a very short time to claim those that remained; and such was the industry of faction, that an incident which derived its source from the anxiety of some individuals for the king's safety was entirely turned to his prejudice. It was even asserted, 'that those persons who had assembled at the Tuilleries, on the pretext of defending the person of the king, were armed with the same kind of poniard that had been found on the man first seized; that they were all decided aristocrates, united in a conspiracy to take the first opportunity of carrying off the king and royal family; that hearing of M. La Fayette's marching with such a body of the national guards to Vincennes, they had hopes of putting their scheme in execution during his absence; but had been disappointed by the alertness of the national troops who were on duty at the palace, who had refused to quit their post on that memorable day, and had continued to do their duty with the party who came to relieve them until the general returned from Vincennes.'

As this construction was not very probable in itself, and was supported by no evidence whatever, it was thought necessary to give it credibility by a new kind of testimony. A number of prints were engraved, representing a poniard with hooks and angles on one side, for tearing and torturing in withdrawing the instrument after having used it in stabbing. Along with the print was an inscription, indicating that this was a true and faithful representation of the poniard found on the assassin seized in the palace, and on many of the aristocrates who had also been seized and disarmed by the national guards on the same evening. And from this time all the noblesse and others, who went regularly to the Tuilleries to pay their duty to the king or any of the royal family, were denominated by the populace *Chevaliers du Poignard.* In this manner a jealousy of the king, and a prejudice against all who shewed a particular attachment

to him, was kept up in the minds of the Parisian populace.

Lewis XVI had always been of a pious turn of mind; and the general tenor of his life, unlike that of his grandfather, was not in opposition to the religion which he professed.

Religious impressions, it is likely, were felt by him with augmented sensibility on account of the troubles and dangers with which he and his family were surrounded.

Numbers of ecclesiastics frequented the palais of the Tuilleries—it was said that those who had refused to take the oaths decreed by the national assembly were received with greater signs of cordiality than the others.

If it was impolitic in the king to *shew* any predilection for the former, it was nevertheless very natural for him to *feel* it. It would probably arise from a sentiment of compassion mixed with esteem for men who had been deprived of their benefices for no other reason than that they chose to obey the dictates of conscience rather than those of interest.

It is possible that some of the clergy who took the oath may have acted as conscientiously as the others; but when one set of men sacrifice their fortune rather than do what is required of them, and another set make their fortune by doing it, the world generally admire and honour the former more than the latter.

It was not so in this instance: the violent spirit of party and political faction destroys every sentiment of candour. The men who gave the strongest proof that men can give, of being directed by conscience and integrity, became the objects of popular execration, and those who might have been so naturally suspected of acting from base and sordid motives were regarded as patriots. The preference which the king was said to give to the former was made use of by factious men as a cause of clamour, and was represented to the people as a proof of his being an enemy to the constitution.

The king had formed the design of passing the Easter holidays at St. Cloud. He wished to be somewhat removed from the noise and tumult of the capital, while he was engaged in the duties of religion.

The monarch's intentions were no sooner known, than rumours were spread with great assiduity, that he wished to go to St. Cloud, that he might have the sacrament administered by unconstitutional priests, and that he might arrange matters for withdrawing to a greater distance from the capital, and raising a civil war; or perhaps in the view of leaving the kingdom, and stirring up his brother kings to make war against France.

Particular pains were taken to infuse these notions into the national guards.

Early on the morning of the 18th of April, a paper was posted on the walls of the Palais Royal by orders from the club des Cordeliers, which was at this time chiefly under the influence of Danton, and of which Marat was a member. In this paper was a direct accusation of the king of having broken the laws he had sworn to maintain —of encouraging the unconstitutional priests to stir up a civil war, and preparing to go with his family to join the foreign enemy. This accusation was signed VINCENT, Greffier, and openly avowed by the club.

Great numbers of the populace crowded from all quarters to the Carousel and Tuilleries. The king's carriages however were ordered, the national guards on duty there were under arms, and the king, the queen, the dauphin, and the princess Elizabeth, went into the coach at eleven o'clock; which they had no sooner done than the surrounding populace began to exclaim and make an outcry in the most insulting and threatening manner: but as they were surrounded with numerous detachments of the national guards, disregarding the insolence of the multitude, the king ordered the postilions to drive on; on which, instead of keeping off the crowd, the guards closed before the horses, threatened the postilions if they should dare to proceed, and swore they would not permit the

royal family to leave Paris. The king's domestic servants, and those immediately attached to his person, were in the meantime abused, maltreated, and dragged from the carriages, about which they had pressed with a view to cover the royal family from the insults of the rabble. One gentleman of the bedchamber having been seized by them at the very window of the coach, the king stretched forth his arm, and endeavoured to retain him; but the gentleman was much abused, and dragged away notwithstanding.

The queen's maître d'hotel was in danger of being actually killed by a group of the rabble. He was rescued from their violence by the efforts of certain citizens, who knew and esteemed the man, and with difficulty carried him into the guard-room.

The king had the mortification to hear the most insulting and abusive expressions directed against the queen. One man in the uniform of the national guards, approaching the carriage, and addressing the king himself, told him that he infringed the law by countenancing priests who had not taken the constitutional oaths; 'et parce qu'il souffroit qu'ils vinssent dire la messe dans la chapelle de son chateau.'—'Malheureux! retirez-vous,' said the king; 'qui vous a établi juge de ma conscience?'*

The gross insults offered to the royal family, and particularly to the female part of it, were not confined to the lowest rabble. Some citizens of superior rank joined in them. The inhabitants of Paris have been generally accounted the most polished and polite citizens in Europe; and the idea *was* well-founded: but in matters which deeply affect the interest, and strongly agitate the passions, to expect protection from politeness is to rely on a shield of gilded paper as a defence from cannon-balls.

M. Bailly, the mayor, hastened to the Tuilleries to suppress the disorder; but he was not listened to. M.

* And because he allowed them to perform mass in the chapel of the palace.

† Who made you judge of my conscience, fellow?

La Fayette ordered the national guards to open to the right and left, to clear away the multitude, and allow the king's coach to pass. He was not obeyed.

After having been more than three hours in the coach, exposed to the insults and derision of the multitude and of the mutinous soldiery, the king and royal family were under the necessity of getting out of the carriage, and walking to the palace, amidst the groans, hootings, and hissings of the multitude. We find the following expression in Shakespeare.—

> Such a divinity doth hedge in kings,
> That treason doth but peep to what it would.

As the utmost extent of the treason in the present instance was to insult the king and prevent his going to St. Cloud, it cannot be said to have peeped, but to have advanced with broad-faced impudence to its purpose, and effected all at that time intended. That the appearance of the sovereign generally strikes the beholders with more awe than that of any other individual is true; but as this depends entirely on his power, and as he will strike more awe (for the word implies some degree of fear) the more cruelly he exercises his power, it ought not to be mentioned as part of his panegyric. We know that a mild and benevolent sovereign may be beheld by the poorest of his subjects with respect unmixed with a single particle of awe; and such monsters as Robespierre and Carrier struck as much awe as any king, emperor, or sultan, that ever lived. At one period it was in some measure believed, that a peculiar air of majesty always accompanied the actions and sacred persons of kings, which, independent of guards and ermine, imposed sentiments of respect, and distinguished them from the general race of mankind. The actress who first played the part of Berenice in Racine's tragedy had no sooner pronounced these lines,

> Qu'en quelque obscurité que le ciel l'eût fait naître,
> Le monde en le voyant eût reconnu son maître,

than the audience applied them to Lewis XIV, and all France thought the application just,

Some people have imagined that this supposed air of majesty is the *divinity* to which Shakespeare alludes; but from his putting the observation in the mouth of so worthless a character as the usurper of the throne of Denmark, it is more probable that he meant to expose the folly of such an idea. That great master drew directly from nature. The only crowned heads he ever had an opportunity of seeing were Elizabeth and James. The first was more distinguished by the firm and awful texture of her mind than by the majesty of her person. As for her successor, though he was continually harping on the divine majesty of kings, yet few ever had less majesty of any kind either in mind or person.

It happened unluckily for the honour of Scotland, that though in the long race of her kings, some were in all respects great men, some accomplished gentlemen, and most of them hardy and intrepid warriors, yet he who succeeded to the crown of England was devoid of all those qualities.

If Lewis XVI had not formed any design of withdrawing from France, or at least to a considerable distance from the capital, previous to this period, it is natural to believe that he should begin to think of it after the unworthy and horrible treatment above described. It may, however, have been suggested to him, that this treatment had entirely proceeded from the vilest and most abandoned of the populace, and a detachment of the national guards corrupted by a few traitors, who would be detected and punished by the national assembly, and the honour of the nation vindicated to the satisfaction of all good subjects.

On the 19th, therefore, the king went to the national assembly, and, in a discourse of some length, complained of the resistance which had been made the preceding day to his going to St. Cloud. 'I did not choose,' added the unhappy monarch, 'to repel that resistance by force, which might have proved fatal to a multitude who, being misled, imagine they are acting in support of law when

they are infringing it; but it is of importance to the nation to prove that I am a free agent. Nothing can be more essential to give authority to the sanctions which I have granted to your decrees. On that account, therefore, I persist in my resolution of going to St. Cloud; and the national assembly must be convinced of the propriety of my so doing.'

The assembly applauded the king's speech; but, instead of taking measures to punish the seditious, and to make it manifest that he was not a prisoner, they immediately passed to the order of the day; and the king, in spite of his resolution, did no longer persist in his journey to St. Cloud.

It cannot be supposed but that the majority of the assembly were well disposed to have paid more attention to the king's speech. They thought, however, in the present disposition of the sections of Paris, who were to meet that same night, that any decree against the seditious ran a risk of not being obeyed; and some of the deputies who had rejoiced at their sittings being transferred to Paris, merely for the pleasure of more ample applause and more agreeable society, were now convinced that they were likely to pay too high a price for those gratifications.

In the meantime great pains were taken to persuade the people, that the accusation of the Cordeliers was true, and that the king's intention was not to have remained at St. Cloud, but to have proceeded to Compeigne; and that post-horses were placed at proper distances on the road to carry him and his family thither.

On this assertion, which was without foundation, the king's conduct was commented on in the severest terms; and his inferred hypocrisy and treachery were held up to popular execration in journals and handbills, while the most seditious and treasonable language was spoken with impunity in the groups of the garden of the palais royal. One fellow repeated the following maxims in various groups on the 19th and 20th, and was heard with applause as often as he repeated them.—' Un roi est un per-

sonnage inutile, un ogre qui dévore trente millions par an.' *

And as impiety and treason have gone hand in hand in France since the beginning of the revolution, another orator having assured the circle which surrounded him that the king had received the sacrament that very morning from a nonjuring priest, one of the audience added, that 'he ought to be obliged to go to the parish-church, and take the sacrament over again from a constitutional one.' 'S'il a mangé un bon Dieu chez lui,' said the wretch, 'il en mangera bien deux; il est gourmand.'

Besides the emissaries who were dispersed to all places of public resort, to circulate calumnies against the court, and the motion-makers (les motionnaires) that took their stations in the palais royal, there was a society at this time called Société Fraternelle, which met in the church of the Jacobins near the famous club of Jacobins, of which this société fraternelle was an emanation of the most virulent and inflammable portion; and from it there daily issued libels and satires without number, all calculated to irritate the people against the king, his family, and ministers.

To shew to what a height sedition was carried at this time, it is only necessary to give a few extracts from periodical papers, published and avowed by their writers. What follows is from a paper entitled 'L'Orateur du Peuple.'

'Courage, braves Parisiens! Encore un pas, et la victoire est à vous. Le roi fuyoit, et vous lui avez ordonné de rester dans la capitale. Le peuple a coupé les courrois de ses chevaux. La Fayette a vainement caracollé, peroré; grimaces qui ne prennent plus: il a été hué. Bailly de même. Songez que, si le roi quitte la France, il n'y a pas de doute qu'il ne soit déchu du trône, et immolé lui et le dernier rejetton de sa race à la juste fureur d'une grande nation! Mais il vous en coutera peut-être

* A king is a very useless personage—a monster who devours thirty millions of livres annually.

dix années de combats, et la perte de trois millions de vos concitoyens, avant de faire triompher votre liberté.

' Mottié a demandé que le département s'assemblat. Il a eu le front d'y paroître, et a voulu qu'on l'autorisât à faire feu sur le peuple. Le directoire penchoit pour ce parti; mais Danton étoit là! Il a pulverisé, de la foudre de son éloquence populaire, la demande des sieurs Bailly et Mottié.

' Louis XVI, aujourd'hui encore roi des Français! arrête. Où cours-tu, monarque, abusé par des conseils perfides? As-tu bien pesé les suites de ce départ, l'ouvrage de ta femme? Le peuple ignore-t-il que de St. Cloud tu te disposes à partir pour Compiegne, et de-là pour la frontière? Ne savons-nous pas que la bouche des rois fut toujours l'antre du mensonge? Une furie te pousse dans le précipice! Elle t'a inoculé sa rage contre les Français.

' Eh bien! Si tu pars, nous ne voyons plus en toi que Tarquin chassé de Rome! Nous saisissons tes chateaux, tes palais, ta liste civile. Nous proscrirons tà tête. Que les Porsenna s'avancent! les Scævola sont prêts.' *

* Courage, brave Parisians! One effort more, and the victory will be yours. The king was about to fly, and you have ordered him to remain in the capital. The people have cut the harness of his horses. La Fayette has harangued and capered, and made grimaces, without effect: he was hissed. The same has happened to Bailly. Remember that, if the king quits France, there can be no doubt of his being dethroned, and he with his whole race sacrificed to the just fury of a great nation. But perhaps it will cost France a ten years struggle and three millions of inhabitants before liberty shall completely triumph.

Mottié required that the department should be assembled. He had the effrontery to appear there, and desired that he might be authorized to fire on the people. Some leaned to that measure; but Danton was present, and, with the thunder of popular eloquence, blasted the hopes of Bailly and Mottié.

Lewis XVI, still king of the French, stop. Whether do you run, abused by perfidious counsels? Have you well weighed the consequences of that journey, to which you are prompted by your wife? Do you think that the people are ignorant that from St. Cloud you intend to proceed to Compiegne, and from thence to the frontiers? Do not we know that the mouth of kings always was the cavern of falsehood? A fury pushes you

At this period Danton had the greatest influence in the society of Cordeliers, who held their meetings in the church of that order. He was not a member of the constituent assembly, but confidentially connected with Robespierre who was. The Cordeliers were considered as more patriotic, or, in the sense in which that word was understood, more furious against the court, the noblesse, and the non-juring clergy than the jacobins themselves.

Marat was also one of the luminaries of the club of Cordeliers. His powers for public speaking and his influence in the societies were inferior to those of Danton; but as nothing could surpass the intrepidity of Marat, as he affected the dress, manners, and language of the lowest people, called himself their friend, and wrote a journal in which he abused the rich and flattered the poor, he had more influence with the mob than Danton or any body else. In this journal, to which he always put his name, he used a style of language which certainly was never before avowedly used to any living king or any minister actually in place.

In the bright era of the Grecian republic, a love of liberty was the most distinguishing characteristic of a refined people. The rest of the world, to whom liberty was unknown, were barbarians. Many incidents in the course of the French revolution seem to exhibit an effect precisely the reverse—a refined people becoming barbarians from a passion for liberty. This affords a pretext for those who are not lovers of freedom, because they fatten on the wages of servility, to represent liberty herself, not as the virtuous Addison has done,

> - - - - - - a goddess heavenly bright,
> Profuse of bliss and pregnant with delight,

but as a malignant enchantress who turns men into brutes.

you down the precipice; she has inoculated you with her rage against the French nation.

Well, if you do go, we will consider you as a Tarquin driven from Rome. We will seize on your castles and palaces and civil list; we will proscribe your head. Let the Porsennas advance; the Scævolas are ready.

Let it be always remembered, however, that the vices of the votaries do not alter the virtues of the saint. Whatever wickedness men may commit, from a pretended or perverted passion for freedom, genuine liberty is as valuable, and will be as much valued by men of spirit and discernment, as ever. The crime of Tarquin did not injure the virtuous character of Lucretia.

The following extracts will give the reader an idea of Marat's manner. They are taken from one of his journals, entitled

Addresse de Jean-Baptiste Marat, l'Ami du Peuple, à Louis XVI Roi des Français.

' SIRE,

' Né simple citoyen, peut-être meriteriez vous d'être cru sur votre parole; mais né sur le trône, avèc tous les vices de votre éducation, et avec trente-six ans écoulés au milieu de la cour la plus corrompue de l'Europe, sans cesse flagorné par les bas valets qui vous environnent, poussé aux crimes par des ministres atroces, ou de perfides courtisans, et continuellement entraîné dans la revolte contre vos devoirs par votre famille, quelle confiance pourriez-vous inspirer dans vos protestations d'attachement et de fidélité à la patrie?

' Que vos agens venaux applaudissent à de pareils témoignages; que vos crédules concitoyens fassent chorus bêtement, cela est dans l'ordre; mais ne vous flattez pas de donner le change aux patriotes clairvoyans.

' Parlez—quelle confiance pourrions-nous avoir dans la parole, dans les sermens d'un roi qui n'avoit assemblé la nation que pour l'engager à combler l'abîme creusé par les dilapidations de ses ministres, des princes de sa maison, de ses favoris et des autres fripons de sa cour; d'un roi qui essaya de dissoudre l'assemblée nationale dès qu'il trouva quelque résistance à ses volontés; d'un roi qui travailla six semaines à l'exécution de l'infernal projet de mettre la capitale à feu et à sang, pour punir ses habitans de l'appui généreux qu'ils sembloient promettre aux représentans de la nation contre les attentats du depotisme?

'Soyez donc votre propre juge, et dites-nous si un tel roi mérite d'autres noms que ceux d'automate stupide, ou de perfide trompeur. Sire, vous êtes l'ami de la liberté, comme votre épouse est l'amie des Français. En vous rendant le docile organe de leurs impostures, vos ministres ont fait leur métier ordinaire; en dévoilant ces impostures aux yeux indignés du public, je remplis le plus saint des devoirs.'*

So many men have affected to act from patriotic disinterested motives, whose subsequent conduct has proved that they had been guided by the most sordid views of self-interest, that some people are tempted to believe that no such sentiment as that of disinterested patriotism now exists in the world. But if there were no such feeling, there would be no such pretence: people would not affect what

* Had you been born a plain citizen, perhaps you might have been believed on your word; but, born the heir of a crown, with all the vices of your education, and after having spent six and thirty years in the most corrupt court in Europe, everlastingly flattered by the sycophants who surround you, pushed to vice by monsters of wickedness and perfidious courtiers, and continually seduced from your duty by those belonging to your family—what confidence can be given to your protestations of attachment and fidelity to the country?

Let your venal creatures applaud such protestations, and the credulous citizens foolishly join in the chorus. That was to be expected: but do not flatter yourself with the hopes of deceiving the penetrating eyes of true patriots.

Speak—what confidence could we put in the word or oath of a king, who assembled the states-general for no other purpose but to complete the mischief occasioned by the extravagance of his ministers, his favourites, and the other knaves of his court; of a king who wished to dissolve the national assembly, as soon as it shewed some resistance to his will; of a king who persisted for six weeks in the infernal project of attacking the capital with fire and sword, to punish the inhabitants for the generous support they were inclined to give to the national representatives against the encroachments of despotism? Be your own judge, and declare whether such a king deserves to be considered in any other light than that of a passive tool or a perfidious deceiver. Sire, you are just such a friend to liberty as your spouse is a friend to the French nation.

In rendering you the tame organ of their impositions, your ministers have acted in character. In unmasking these impostures to the indignant eyes of the public, I fulfil the most sacred of my duties.

does not exist in nature. Those who use arguments founded on virtue and patriotism, without excepting even this wretch Marat, must at some period of their lives have felt sentiments of that kind, and must believe that they still exist in the breasts of their auditors; otherwise they would not expect to influence by them.

Such language as Marat on this and on other occasions addressed to so mild a prince as Louis XVI, is still more revolting to a candid mind, and less applicable than the hyperbolical praises bestowed by Boileau and other poets of his time on Louis XIV, though heaven knows the latter are sufficiently revolting and inapplicable.

Jeune et vaillant héros, dont la haute sagesse
N'est point le fruit tardif d'une lente vieillesse,
Et qui seul, sans ministre, à l'example des Dieux,
Soutiens tout par toi-même, et vois tout par tes yeux.
Quand je vois ta sagesse, en ses justes projets,
D'une heureuse abondance enrichir tes sujets—&c. &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Observations on the different Conduct of Men to Monarchs in Prosperity and in Adversity—The Indignation formerly manifested by the French Nation against the English for their Conduct towards their Kings—Supposed Dialogue between Lewis XIV and one of his Courtiers—All Attempts to alter Men's Opinions vain—Anecdote of one of the Chevalier St. Méard's Judges—A Republican Government often tyrannical—British House of Peers—Reflections—Rash Decrees of the Legislative Assembly—The French Nation no way interested in establishing a Republic in England or other Countries.

It is an old observation, and what might be of use to sovereigns in estimating the sincerity of the attachment of those around their persons, that the same disposition which renders men obsequious to prosperity and servile to power, is apt to make them neglectful of the unfortunate and insolent to the weak. No nation ever pushed both extremes farther than the French in their behaviour to their

kings in these opposite situations; and in both cases they have been very lavish in their endeavours to throw ridicule and abuse on their neighbours for not following their example. At present they deride other nations for their attachment to monarchy. Formerly, when they themselves displayed more abject servility to their kings than any other European nation, they described the English as barbarians for resisting the tyranny of the house of Stuart, and for claiming freedom. Warm in the cause of depressed royalty, they exclaimed against the insolence of a people who thought they had a right to make any alteration in their government. If France and other countries of Europe had not been distracted with internal as well as external commotions in the time of Charles I, they would all have supported the cause of the monarch against the people of England for attempting to regulate their own government, and with a view to extirpate those ideas of freedom which began to spread at that time. Lewis XIV was excited not only by his own inclination but also by the wishes of his subjects to enter into a war with England, on purpose to punish the nation for the crime they had committed against the king, and to restore the monarchy. Boileau wrote an ode expressly against this nation, of which the following are two stanzas.—

Quoi! ce peuple aveugle en son crime,
Qui prennant son roi pour victime,
Fit du trône un théâtre affreux,
Pense-t-il que le Ciel, complice
D'un si funeste sacrifice,
N'a pour lui ni foudre ni feux?

Armes-toi, France, prends la foudre,
C'est à toi de réduire en poudre
Ces sanglans ennemis des loix.
Suis la victoire qui t'appelle,
Et vas sur ce peuple rebelle
Venger la querelle des rois.

If the restoration had not taken place, there is little reason to doubt but that the monarch would have followed the poet's advice. Indeed he proved this by seizing the first pretext that occurred for *grasping the thunder* in

the cause of kings, in acknowledging the son of James II as prince of Wales, contrary to the act of settlement of the English parliament, and contrary to the opinion of his own council.

That some such dialogue as the following might pass between Lewis and some of his courtiers on that occasion is a supposition not inconsistent with the character of that prince and the sentiments of his court.

Lewis. Notwithstanding that Beauvilliers, De Torci, and others of my council, were against the measure, I have acknowledged the son of James II as king of Great Britain and Ireland; and I am determined to re-establish him on the throne of his ancestors, in spite of the decrees of his rebellious subjects in parliament assembled.

Courtier. The determination is magnanimous, and worthy of so great a monarch. It is at once just and politic; for the shocking manner in which that ungovernable people have treated their kings is a most alarming example to all the sovereigns of Europe, and it would be dangerous to allow it to remain any longer unpunished.

Lewis. The cause of kings is the cause of heaven, by whose appointment kings reign; and the vengeance of heaven evidently followed all those wretches who resisted the power of Charles I in that island, as well as those who afterwards brought him to the scaffold. I have been assured that all of them died violent deaths. You perhaps remember the particulars.

Courtier. The avenging power of heaven was never more apparent, as your majesty piously observes, than in the deaths of all who directly or indirectly contributed to that blessed king's murder. Hampden was killed in the very act of rebellion. Pym died of a horrid disease, particularly commissioned to cut him off. The soul of Cromwell was carried to hell in a storm. The regicides and others had their hearts and bowels torn out on the scaffold. Those of the king's judges who fled out of England were privately put to death in other countries by the laudable resentment of the king's relations. Sydney, the

republican, who had taken part in the rebellion against Charles I, was executed for a plot against his son. Russel, who, to the disgrace of the noble family to which he belonged, was for limiting the power of the crown so as to render it unsupportable to a prince of spirit, and had the insolence to promote a bill for excluding the lawful heir because he professed the true religion, was justly beheaded; and Essex, who was engaged in the same conspiracy with Sydney and Russel, either cut his own throat or had it cut by others: for in either case your majesty's observation is confirmed, that the vengeance of heaven in one way or another extends to all those daring wretches who oppose the authority of their sovereign on any pretext whatever, as kings are not accountable for the exercise of the power which God has given them, to any but to God alone.

Lewis. It is singular, however, that in placing the prince of Orange on their throne, the English have not consigned that degree of power to him which naturally ought to belong to a king. He is limited, I understand, in some respects according to the system which Russel wished to have applied to the duke of York.

Courtier. Your majesty's remark is of infinite importance; for, in thus limiting the power of the crown, the English nation have established a precedent which may affect the other monarchies in Europe more than even the atrocious conduct of Cromwell; because many men who would shrink from the very idea of the murder of their sovereign, and are averse to a republic, may nevertheless be so deluded, that they would agree to have the lustre of the crown diminished by circumscribing the power of the prince who wears it. I am confident that your majesty will be so completely successful in the just war that you intend to engage in against the English nation, or rather against the principles and government of that nation, as to expel the present usurper, and re-establish King James in the plenitude of royal power. But if, contrary to probability, *that* should be found too difficult or too expensive,

and there were no more hopes for James, it would then perhaps be highly suitable to your majesty's wisdom to assist William himself in obtaining that fullness of power over his subjects that becomes a king; that the dangerous and odious example of a limited monarchy may no longer shock the sight of the monarchs, and corrupt the hearts of the people, of every nation in Europe.

Lewis. The name of the prince of Orange has been always odious to me. I shall assist *him* in nothing: but I am resolved that James shall be restored to the throne of England with all the power that was possessed by Henry VIII, and with the re-establishment of the true religion which that apostate abolished.

Accordingly Lewis made the attempt; and we know that it was not till all his expensive and sanguinary efforts to overturn the government and change the opinions of the people of England had failed, and had nearly exhausted the resources and shaken the loyalty of his own subjects, that the English nation obtained peace, and were permitted to entertain their own opinions, and settle their government to their own taste.

It may perhaps seem surprising that the people of one country should have ever thought that the opinions or form of government of another country was any concern of theirs; but that such an idea should have prevailed in the middle or towards the end of the seventeenth century is not so surprising as it would be to find it existing at the end of the eighteenth. After the many bloody experiments which have been made with a view to alter men's opinions on religion, government, or indeed on any thing else, by force, we might naturally imagine that the point would be given up. Philip II, with his tortures and his inquisition, and his great generals and his disciplined armies, could make nothing of it even against the small country of Holland, which, small as it is, has never failed to repel all invaders but those she had some inclination to receive. The mighty Lewis, after being prompted by his own vanity, the flattery of his poets, and the folly of his subjects,

to grasp *la foudre*, on purpose to force the British nation to receive the king and the doctrine which he approved, was obliged to desist when he found that the *lightning* scorched himself and his subjects more than his enemies.

Indeed it is not only clear, that all attempts to alter men's opinions by violent means failed in the desired effect; but that they generally tend to rivet them more firmly in their old sentiments. The persecutions of the heathens against the Christians, and the Roman Catholics against the Protestants, sufficiently prove this; and, if a more recent instance were necessary, the annals of tyranny could not afford a stronger than has been exhibited by the clergy of France, whom no species of perfidious cruelty and persecution has been able to shake in their opinions, or prevent their avowing the dictates of their conscience. On the execrable 2d of September 1792, in the garden of the Carmes at Paris, the venerable archbishop of Arles saw the assassin raise his sabre, and he received the repeated strokes without shrinking, rather than seem to comply in the least degree with decrees which he thought unjust and impious. The bishop of Beauvais and the bishop of Saintes, with near two hundred ecclesiastics of different denominations, were massacred on the same day in the same garden, for no other crime than refusing to disavow their opinions.

It is not more true, that the usual effect of persecution or ill-usage on account of particular opinions is to make the persecuted cling more cordially to them, and feel augmented aversion against those of their persecutors, than that kind and gentle treatment renders men open to argument, and disposed to the renunciation of error the moment they are convinced that their opinions are erroneous. It is only since the Jews were treated with mildness, and particularly since they began to be caressed and entertained by men of high rank in this country, that any of them could be convinced of their delusion, persuaded that the Messiah had already appeared in the world, and that some of their distinguishing ceremonies were no longer neces-

sary. This observation strikes the minds of some people so forcibly as to convince them, that creating a few Jews, soon after their conversion to Christianity, grandees of Spain, or peers of Great Britain, would do more to the abolition of circumcision than all the racks of the inquisition.

Nothing revolts the spirit of man so much as to have any thing forced upon it; the very appearance of force makes it reject with disgust what it might have embraced spontaneously. He who even argues with a dictatorial air, indisposes his hearers from admitting his inferences or adopting his opinions. A pretty certain way of spreading any particular way of thinking in a country, is for the government to threaten and endeavour to terrify those who entertain it; it renders their own peculiar way of thinking dearer to them than it was before; it converts an opinion, which they might have changed, into a principle which it is a point of honour to maintain; and although it is dangerous for them to speak their minds, yet they have an interest in making proselytes which otherwise they would not have had, because, by making many of their way of thinking, their danger will be removed.

It is the business of government to controul men's actions, not their opinions; and those are recorded as the happiest times, in which the most uncontrolled freedom was allowed to the declaration of opinion. *Rara temporum felicitate*, says the historian, *ubi sentire quæ velis, et quæ sentias dicere licet.* All the terrors of the tribunal of political inquisition, or of the Ponte di Sopiri at Venice, cannot make one who thinks monarchy a preferable form of government to republicanism change his opinion; nor can all the thunder of the *ultima ratio regum* make a republican prefer monarchy. The utmost that severities can do is to make hypocrites; it is impossible for them to make converts. Opinion, so far from being under the power of other men's will, is not under a man's own; it is the offspring of his reason, of whatever force that rea-

son may be, whether well or ill-informed; and although it is often perverted by prejudice and influenced by situation, yet a man's real opinion is founded on what appears to him reasonable at the time, and he cannot alter it until what appeared reasonable appears to him the reverse. Opinions therefore cannot justly be imputed to any man as crimes. This is so obvious, that even one of those bloody judges who examined the chevalier Saint-Méard, in the prison of the Abbaye at Paris in September 1792, was sensible of it. When the intrepid Saint-Méard avowed himself a royalist, and an universal murmur arose from the bloody circle who heard him,—'Ce n'est pas pour juger les opinions,' said the judge, 'que nous sommes ici, c'est pour en juger les résultats.'*

Had all those who decided on the fate of the prisoners adhered to that maxim, there would have been no massacres.

Men may be royalists, thank heaven! and yet friends to freedom; as they may be republicans, and yet abettors of tyranny.

Without alluding to the shocking despotism which governs the republic of France, let us throw our eyes on other republics.

What kind of friends has freedom in the senate of Venice, or the great council of Bern?

If the same question is asked respecting the British house of peers, the answer will be different.

Freedom has never been without friends there.

Who were the principal authors of the revolution in the year 1688?

The wisest men in the house of peers have been as sincere supporters of the rights of the democratic part of the constitution, as of their own; they well know, that upon it the public liberty is chiefly founded. And the wisest members of the house of commons have supported the just rights of the house of peers; they well know, that certain

* It is not to judge of men's opinions that we are here, but to judge of their actions.

members of that house had a principal hand in forming the constitution, such as it has been since the year 1688, and on some occasions have had the honour of preserving it since that period.

Although the royalists in Charles I's time were generally thought enemies to liberty, it was not universally the case; some were the friends of liberty *notwithstanding* their being royalists, and some were royalists *because* they were the sincere friends of liberty—being fully persuaded that her happiest and most permanent residence in this island would always be under a limited monarchy. And although the republicans of the same period were generally thought friends to freedom, yet some assumed the character and sentiments of republicans, because they wished to establish tyranny.

Men of the greatest worth and virtue always have had, and always will have different speculative opinions on those two different forms of government; every man has a right to speculate on government as on all other subjects, and while he confines himself to speculation he is not the just object of punishment; but when from speculation he proceeds to action the case is totally different. The peace of society is not to be with impunity disturbed with insurrection, because a few men prefer a different form of government to that under which they live. If therefore a portion of the subjects of a republic attempt by force to convert it into a monarchy, or if those of a monarchy endeavour by the same means to overturn the constitution and form a republic; the men against whom such actions are proved, become the just objects of punishment; and by the laws of the mildest government, whether monarchical or republican, that ever existed, that punishment is death.

The rash and intemperate nature of certain decrees of the national convention, soon after the 10th of August, discovered a disposition to covert all the monarchies of Europe into republics; and the foolish answers made by some of their presidents to certain deputations from fo-

reign countries, which appeared at the bar of the convention, tended to strengthen the same suspicion.

That some inconsiderate and enthusiastic men entertained such an idea, is evident from the circumstances just mentioned; but that the majority of the convention could think such a scheme practicable, or that it would be for the benefit of France to put herself to expense or trouble to bring it about, if it were, seems highly improbable.

The French pretend that they have overturned monarchy in France, because of the vices inherent in that kind of government, which enfeebled the state and depressed the energy of the nation. They declare that, by being a republic, France has acquired triple strength, and is capable of efforts far surpassing her power at any former period.

Without examining whether the efforts she has lately made, and the strength she has displayed, depend on her being a republic, or on other circumstances, how is this opinion of the French to be reconciled with their endeavouring to inspire the other nations of Europe, particularly those with whom they are at war, with a desire to adopt a republican form of government? Do they wish that their rivals and enemies should acquire triple strength also? If all the monarchies of Europe were converted into republics, then, according to the principles of the French themselves, the great superiority they have acquired would be lost, and their weight in the balance of Europe reduced to what it was before the revolution.

It may be said, that in endeavouring to overturn monarchies they are actuated by hatred to kings, and by private malevolence; but whatever indications of this kind may have appeared in moments of enthusiasm, it is impossible to imagine that the governors of a great nation can, for the gratification of a childish humour, persist in a plan, which, according to their own principles, would, when accomplished, render their rivals more formidable. To act conformably to state policy, and consistent with

their declarations respecting the source of their new-acquired strength; so far from spreading their opinions among other nations, or using any means of inducing them to adopt the maxims of their convention, the French ought to lay a general embargo upon them, and confine them within their own territories as valuable secrets, which secure their superiority over monarchical states, as completely as the use of fire-arms secured a superiority to the Spaniards over the Mexicans. It seems highly probable that they have now at least relinquished the system of republican crusades, if they ever seriously entertained it, and have pretty generally adopted the principles of one of their countrywomen, who in conversation with an Englishman, who asserted that it would be absolutely necessary for the French nation to restore monarchy before they could obtain peace, replied,—'Monsieur, nous ne voulons plus de roi—c'est notre affaire, laissez nous tranquilles. Mais vous autres vous aimez les rois, à la bonne heure, prenez en une douzaine si vous voulez —on vous laissera tranquilles.'

But if there is little reason to think that the French will ever take pains to spread their political principles in this country, there is still less reason to dread that either their principles or example will be adopted by the people of Great Britain, although the French had that intention: the incidents of the French revolution are sufficient, and far more than sufficient, to remove such an idea from every worthy mind, however fond of genuine freedom. Can a national strength that is acquired by the seizing of private property, be an object of envy to the citizens of a country where property is secure? Can the idea of provinces added to France, be a compensation to those French citizens whose fortunes have been torn from them to defray the expense of the conquest? Can any amount of success against foreign enemies afford consolation to those who deplore the loss of parents, of consorts, of children, of friends or relations, by internal massacres?

As England can derive no benefit from the misery of

individuals in France, and certainly feels many inconveniences from the augmented strength of that nation, by whatever horrible means it has been augmented; assuredly it is her interest, independent of ten thousand considerations arising from general humanity, that a safe and honourable peace were speedily obtained, by which her own prosperity might be secured, and the wretched individuals of France might become more happy and less formidable. Let France retain the republican form of government she seems so fond of, if she chooses; and let the inhabitants of this island seriously reflect on the two great attempts that have been made in Europe to turn a monarchy into a republic. The one took place in the middle of the last century, the other towards the end of this. England was the theatre of the first, France of the second. After exhibiting a most sanguinary spectacle to Europe, of four years continuance, the first ended in the tyranny of Cromwell; the second still continues, spreading bloodshed and dismay through Europe, and rendering France the abode of wretchedness. Let the inhabitants of this island also remember, that monarchy was not restored to Great Britain by a combination of foreign powers, displeased forsooth at her having assumed a republican form of government. Rather than have admitted of such insolent interference, or restored monarchy at their command, she would have remained a republic until this hour: but the free-born inhabitants of Great Britain, of their own free-will and accord, without the least regard or consideration for the opinion or inclination of other states, thought proper to re-establish monarchy. And who can say what France, left entirely to the freedom of her own choice, might do? Is it unlikely that, harassed and disgusted with so many internal convulsions, and retaining a due sense of the abuses of her ancient government, she may, as soon as she obtains breathing-time, seek for permanent peace and prosperity in a monarchical form of government, equally free from the vices of the old system and of the present? In the meantime it is devoutly to

be wished, that Great Britain will ever adhere to and support the genuine spirit of her own free constitution; and while she expresses a just detestation of the democratic tyranny which has prevailed in France, that she will ever maintain an equal aversion to the more regular and imposing despotism of some of the powers combined against that unhappy country.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The National Assembly avoid any Inquiry concerning the Insults offered to the King—Strange Address of the Department of Paris to the King—Cardinal of Montmorency and Bishop of Senlis resign their Offices—King's Chaplains dismissed—The King hears Mass performed by a Constitutional Priest on Easter-Day—M. La Fayette resigns his Command, and afterwards at the Entreaty of the Troops resumes it—King's Declaration to Foreign Courts—It has a bad Effect—Done against the Opinion of M. Montmorin—Scheme concerted with the Emperor for re-establishing the King's Authority.

WHEN the national assembly passed to the order of the day on the king's complaint, it did not proceed from their being insensible to the insult which had been offered to him, or from the majority being unwilling that the guilty should be severely punished; but from their being persuaded that, in the spirit to which the populace and the national guards had been wrought up, any attempt to animadvert on the subject would expose the weakness of the assembly, and perhaps prove dangerous to the royal family.

The department of Paris had found it expedient to invite the sections to meet on the evening of the day on which the king had been at the national assembly; and the question submitted to their deliberation was, whether they should address him to fulfil his intention of going to St. Cloud, or return him thanks for having chosen to re-

main at Paris, that the public tranquillity might be no longer disturbed.

As all the world knew that it was not from choice that the king had remained at Paris, this seemed an additional insult; and at any rate, nothing could be more indecent, and more humiliating both to the king and the national assembly, than to submit to the shopkeepers and tradesmen of Paris such a question.

The majority of the sections gave a wiser answer than there was reason to expect, by declaring in general terms that there was no room for deliberating. But the ministers, and those immediately about the king's person, were so terrified at the agitation which prevailed, and particularly at the assertion, which had been printed, and posted on the walls, of measures having been prepared to transport the royal family from St. Cloud to Compiegne, that the king was advised to contradict that assertion in a letter to the department of Paris, in which it was also desired, that this contradiction should be made public as soon as possible.

The department accordingly ordered the king's declaration to be immediately published, and circulated at all places of public resort. But declarations of a contrary tendency were also fixed upon the walls, and allowed to remain, while that of the king was in many places torn down by the populace as false.

The club of Jacobins, that of the Cordeliers, and the Société Fraternelle, chiefly made up of the most wicked and worthless members of the former, persevered with such success in agitating the populace, and in corrupting the minds of the national guards, that the department of Paris thought it expedient to present an address to the king, expressing their concern at the favour he shewed to the non-juring clergy, and others who were enemies of the constitution, begging, 'that he would withdraw his countenance from all those of whom the people were suspicious; that he would announce by his ambassadors at

the different courts of Europe, that a glorious revolution had taken place in France, which he had cordially adopted; and that he was proud of being the king of a free people.' The address concluded with the expression of a desire, that the king would intrust this annunciation of his sentiments to ministers who were *not unworthy of trust.*

In short, the import of the address was, that the king should dismiss the servants he loved, and employ those he hated; that he should not receive the sacrament from priests whom he regarded on account of their piety, but from those he despised for their irreligion; that he should announce a series of gross falsehoods to all the courts of Europe; and, finally, that he should change the ministers in whom he put trust for others in whom he put none.

These were strange requests to be made to a king; especially as they were not made by a foreign enemy at the gates of his capital after a victory, but by those who had the direction of his capital, and who called themselves his loving subjects. Nothing can give a stronger idea of the wretched state to which this unfortunate monarch was reduced, than that it was thought necessary that they should all, except the last, be immediately complied with.

To alleviate as much as was in their power the pain of such a compliance, the cardinal of Montmorency, grand aumônier, the bishop of Senlis, premier aumônier, M. de Villequier, and M. Amedee de Duras, principal gentlemen of the king's bedchamber, gave in their resignations. All the ecclesiastics belonging to the king's chapel were dismissed: and on the first Sunday after the address of the department, he went to the church of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, and heard mass performed by the new priest on Easter-day.

Whatever uneasiness the others may have produced, it is probable that this last was a sacrifice more repugnant to the king's conscience than all the rest; since he considered the sacred rite as in some degree prophaned by the worthlessness of the person who performed it: for

there is no question that the king had been taught to consider all the ecclesiastics in that light who had taken the oaths.

Unfounded as such an opinion may be, it is not so absurd as to impute any thing criminal to men, because they refused to take the oaths; and the outcry that was raised against them was as wicked as absurd. The general accusation of their being *réfractaires à la loi* was absolutely false. The law exacted that they should either take a particular oath, or resign their benefices. They chose the last. This is no breach of law: on the contrary, it is conforming to the law by choosing one of two measures left to their option by the law; and, in affording protection to men reduced to want by obeying the dictates of their conscience, the king observed the laws of humanity without violating those of the constitution.

The constitution also left the free exercise of his religion to every individual. Messrs. Barnave, Rabaud de Saint-Etienne, and other Protestant members of the national assembly, who had in compliance with the will of the majority voted for the civil constitution of the clergy, were allowed, as well as every other person in France, the public exercise of their religion. It was never exacted of any of them to attend the Catholic worship administered by ecclesiastics who had taken the oaths. How cruel and arbitrary must it appear then to insist upon the king's doing this, or to refuse to him the freedom of worshipping God in his private chapel in the manner most agreeable to his conscience!—a freedom which the constitution allowed to be used publicly by every person in the kingdom without exception.

M. de la Fayette was so disgusted at the shameful scene on the 18th of April, that he resigned the command of the national guards. It then appeared how much he was beloved by them. All the battalions assembled. They appointed deputations to the general, expressing sorrow for their past conduct, and promising implicit obedience to his orders in future. They also sent deput-

ations to the municipality and to the department, entreating them to join in soliciting the general to resume the command.

The hotel of La Fayette was filled with these deputations from the different battalions, from the time that he had given in his resignation until the following morning at five o'clock. The street in which his house stood was crowded with the men, all waiting with impatience for the news of his having yielded to their entreaties; but finding that he still refused, they went in crowds to the town-house, and begged of the municipality to use their influence with the general that he should resume the command. The municipality, perceiving that citizens of all the sections joined in this request of the national guards, declared that they would become responsible for the future obedience of the battalions, and entreated the general to yield to the desire of his fellow-citizens.

M. La Fayette expressed a proper sense of the honour done him; adding, that he would not presume to give an immediate answer, but would the following day attend the municipality at the town-house, and there deliver to them his sentiments.

M. La Fayette went accordingly at ten o'clock, and in the common hall, where he found all the representatives of the common council, with deputies from all the battalions of national guards assembled, pronounced a discourse equally distinguished for modesty and good sense. He placed in a strong point of view the horror which every enlightened citizen must have felt at beholding those whose duty it is to support the laws oppose their execution. He added that, if the capital, which was the cradle of the revolution, instead of respecting and obeying the executive powers, should besiege them with tumults, and fatigue them with insults, it would from being the honoured *example* become the *terror* of the French nation; that in the marks of regard with which his fellow-citizens had honoured him, too much attention

had been paid to an individual, but not enough to the laws. ' Dans les marques si touchantes d'affection que j'ai reçues,' said he, ' on a beaucoup trop fait pour moi, on n'a pas assez fait pour la loi; je me suis convaincu, avec la plus tendre émotion, que mes camarades m'aimoient; je n'ai point encore su à quel point ils chérissoient tous les principes sur lesquels la liberté est fondée.'* And he concluded by refusing to resume the command.

On this refusal, and those observations of M. La Fayette, it was resolved, that each battalion should assemble the following day, and make a declaration of their sentiments on the subject pointed out in M. La Fayette's discourse; which was done accordingly by all the different regiments; and in their declarations, instead of expressing attachment to their general, and wishes that he should resume the command, they speak solely of their submission to law, their zeal for the constitution, and their resolution to obey the commander in chief, without once mentioning M. La Fayette.

The municipality having verified the declarations of the national guards, of the cannoniers, of the various companies of chasseurs, and of the cavalry, decreed, that the mayor at the head of a deputation of eight members of the common council should wait on the general, and represent to him that it would endanger the state if he persisted in his first resolution, and that the greatest proof of patriotism he could give would be to resume the command.

It was impossible to resist longer—M. La Fayette thanked the mayor and deputation in becoming terms; and the day following having resumed the command, he expressed his sense of the honour done him by the various corps; and being then on the parade before the town-

* In the affecting marks of attachment I have received, too much regard is shown to me, and too little to the laws. I am thoroughly convinced that my comrades love me; but I am still to learn, how far they are attached to those principles on which liberty is founded.

house, he proposed that they should go in a body to the king, taking with them all of their comrades whom they might meet by the way, and express their sorrow and repentance for what was past, and renew to his majesty their declaration of allegiance.

This proposal was directly adopted. M. La Fayette accompanied them to the Tuilleries; addressed the king, in the name of all the national guards, in the terms which had been agreed on; received a gracious reception and answer from the monarch; and as soon as this was known, the troops expressed their satisfaction by repeated exclamations of 'Vive le Roi! Vive le Restaurateur de la Liberté Françoise! Vive le Petit-fils de Henri IV!' *

In this behaviour of the national guards, who having been excited to mutiny and sedition were so soon after brought to a sense of their crime, and to such expressions of remorse, a strong proof will be found of that fickleness as well as sensibility which is so remarkable in the French character.

This people receive impressions with astonishing sensibility; but these impressions are effaced, and give way to others of a different nature, with a rapidity as extraordinary as the acuteness with which they were first felt; which makes the French appear in the eyes of their neighbours sometimes in the light of children, and sometimes in that of madmen. But when, in consequence of this, it is imagined that they will be easily taken the advantage of, they display of a sudden, and when least expected, a maturity and soundness of judgment that is more surprising and vexatious to their enemies than all the rest.

This return of the national guards to a sense of their duty was highly provoking to a set of men who, unhappily for France, were at this time concentered in the capital. Some of these men from mistaken notions of government, and some from interested and malicious mo-

* Long live the King! Long live the Restorer of French Liberty! Long live the Grandson of Henry IV!

tives, were continually raising suspicions of the king, and endeavouring to create discord and confusion. The persons alluded to had not so much influence in the national assembly, nor in the municipality, as they came to have soon afterwards; nor were they so powerful at this time in the Jacobin society, to which many members of the national assembly belonged, as they were in the club of Cordeliers and the Société Fraternelle, chiefly composed of the refuse of the Jacobins.

The municipality having been informed that some grenadiers of a certain division of the national guards had been particularly active on the 18th in promoting the mutiny, had held the most abusive language against the royal family, and had threatened to fire upon the cavalry, who by M. La Fayette's orders were endeavouring to disengage the king's coach, decreed that this company should be reduced, and another raised in its stead. The reduction took place immediately; but as it was represented to the municipality, that fourteen only had been guilty of the crimes charged, all the rest were admitted into the new-formed company. This transaction was laid hold of by the factious clubs above alluded to, as a pretext for murmurs, accusation, and sedition. The fourteen discarded soldiers were received with marks of favour by the fraternal society: they were feasted by the Cordeliers, and treated as persecuted patriots; while the conduct of the municipality was condemned, and M. La Fayette was accused as an enemy of liberty, and of being bought by the court. Emissaries were also employed to blacken his character, and misrepresent his conduct, among the groups of the idlers in the places of public resort. Placards were posted up, and pamphlets published against him. At the Cordeliers some men were heard to declare, that it would be meritorious to assassinate him; and at the fraternal society a woman, fired by the eloquence of these orators, and intoxicated with the spirit of patriotism, called him among other bad names a second *Sisera*, and swore that she would take the earliest opportunity of

entering his house, and driving a nail into his temples while he was fast asleep.

The capital was kept in such a state of agitation by a few daring and unprincipled men, who had the direction of those incendiary societies, and through their means great influence in the populous suburbs of St. Antoine and St. Marceau, where the poorest and most desperate of the citizens lived, that the king was advised to a measure, which, joined to what he had already done, would, as was imagined, remove all jealousy of him, annihilate every pretext for complaint, and at once restore the public tranquillity. M. Montmorin, at this time minister for foreign affairs, came to the national assembly, and read a letter which by the king's command, as he asserted, he had transmitted to all the French ambassadors and residents at foreign courts, as his majesty's genuine and sincere sentiments respecting the revolution, and the constitution which was just about to be established in France, and which those ambassadors and residents were required to make known to all the courts of Europe, that there might no longer remain any doubt of the king's complete approbation of the new form of government which he had sworn to maintain.

In this letter the following account of the revolution is given.—' Ce que l'on appelle la révolution, n'est que l'anéantissement d'une foule d'abus, accumulés depuis des siécles par l'erreur du peuple, ou le pouvoir des ministres, qui n'a jamais été le pouvoir des rois.

' Ces abus n'étaient pas moins funestes à la nation qu'au monarque. Ces abus, l'autorité, sous des regnes heureux, n'avoit cessé de les attaquer, sans pouvoir les détruire. Ils n'existent plus. La nation souveraine n'a plus que des citoyens égaux en droits, plus de despote que la loi, plus d'organes que des fonctionnaires publics, et le roi est le premier de ces fonctionnaires. Telle est la revolution Françoise.' *

* That which is called the revolution is merely an annihilation of a number of abuses which had been allowed to accumulate in the course of ages

It was added, that 'all the king's power was maintained by the constitution, except the dangerous power of making laws; that the French nation had no internal enemies, but those who are so foolish as to imagine that twenty-four millions of men, after having by a bold exertion destroyed the abuses of their government, will quietly permit them to be re-established; that the most dangerous enemies of the nation were those who circulated doubts of the king's love of the constitution; that such men were either very blind or very wicked; that, believing themselves the friends, they were the real enemies, of royalty; that calumny had even gone the length of asserting, that the king did not enjoy perfect liberty—and this merely because he chose to remain constantly within Paris—a choice which he owed to the patriotism and love of the citizens.'

If the pope, by some extraordinary accident, had fallen into the hands of the Hugonots during the war of the League, and had then issued a declaration importing, that, 'being at perfect freedom, he took that opportunity of avowing his belief in the religious opinions of Calvin; that all who insinuated that he was, or ever had been, of a different way of thinking were guilty of gross calumny; for what he wished above all things was to see the Roman Catholic worship with all its abominations abolished:' such a declaration would have been thought every bit as sincere on the part of his holiness as those in the letter to the foreign courts in the name of Lewis XVI were believed to be either at those courts, or among the French themselves after they began to reflect, which they never

ages by the error of the people or the power of ministers, but never were part of the power of the kings.

Those abuses were not less detrimental to the nation than to the monarch. Under the happiest reigns these abuses were attacked by authority without being removed. They exist no longer. The sovereign nation consists of citizens equal in their rights. There is now no power superior to law; no organ by which the law can speak but the public officers appointed for that purpose; and the king is the first of those public officers. Such is the French revolution.

do during the first impression. If what is announced is agreeable, the French in general are so much engrossed with satisfaction, that they do not consider whether it be probable or not. The reading of this letter was accordingly heard with joy by the assembly, and with enthusiastic applause by the audience in the galleries.

But M. Montmorin had no part in the composition of this letter. It was the production of two of the most popular members at that time in the national assembly; who being of opinion that the ill-humour and agitation of the Parisians proceeded entirely from the pains taken by a few seditious individuals to inspire them with a notion that the king hated the constitution, and secretly conspired with the enemies of France to overturn it, imagined, if his majesty would make a full and strong declaration of his attachment to the constitution, and that he would consider all *its* enemies, whether in or out of France, as *his* enemies, and order this declaration to be announced to the different courts of Europe by his ambassadors; that this measure would at once defeat the designs of the seditious, dissipate the suspicions of the people, restore the public tranquillity, and render the king so popular, that he and the whole royal family might visit St. Cloud, Compeigne, and the other royal villas, as often as they pleased, without raising the least suspicion or uneasiness. In consequence of this persuasion, those two deputies, being acquainted with some persons constantly near the king, impressed the same upon them. Their reasoning being repeated to the king, was afterwards expatiated upon and enforced by the two members with such energy, that he was at last prevailed on to adopt the measure, and desired them to draw such a declaration as they conceived to be necessary for the purpose.

They accordingly did so; and presented it to his majesty, who without any alteration gave it to M. de Montmorin, with orders to reduce it to the form of a letter to be transmitted to his ambassadors at the different courts.

M. de Montmorin, having perused this production,

was astonished at the whole, but particularly at some assertions evidently in contradiction with recent events known to all France. He represented to the king, that he was much afraid it would have an effect directly the reverse of what was expected. The king, being strongly prepossessed in favour of the measure, told the minister that those who advised it were better acquainted than he could be with the temper of the Parisians, and therefore he persisted in the order he had given: on which M. de Montmorin begged to be allowed to resign his office. The king, displeased with the proposal, answered that he expected to be obeyed in the first place; and with regard to his resignation, *that* might be settled afterwards.

M. de Montmorin submitted, and sent the declaration to the ambassadors, and a copy, as has been mentioned, to the national assembly. *

But, notwithstanding the demonstrations of joy and applause which the first reading produced, when people had time to weigh and consider it with coolness and attention, it became evident that M. de Montmorin estimated it properly; that the authors of the declaration had overshot the mark they aimed at. Even those who were most disposed to believe that the king's resolution was to rest satisfied with the constitution, and never to enter into any plot for its overthrow, could not help thinking that the expressions in this declaration went greatly beyond what he could really feel; and therefore condemned it in their hearts as a measure of weakness. Others less partial to the king condemned it as a proof of falsehood, and spread their opinions with such assiduity, that in a very short time the suspicions of his having an intention to withdraw from the kingdom were more general than ever; and the royal family were under the necessity of remaining constantly within the barriers of Paris; for it was ap-

* The account of this transaction was received from one, whose situation enabled him to be acquainted with the whole, and whose veracity may be depended upon.

M. de Montmorin was not superseded in his office until the month of October, at his repeated request.

parent that the shortest excursion might have occasioned a very dangerous insurrection.

A person who had acted an important part in the affairs of France, in consequence of which he was under the necessity of withdrawing from that country, had long meditated a plan for the re-estalishment of the king's authority, which he represented as the common cause of kings, and had been very active at the different courts of Europe in his endeavours to bring them to the same way of thinking.

It was natural to expect that his arguments were as likely to succeed with the brother of the queen of France as with any other potentate. He laid his plan, therefore, before the emperor Leopold, who was then at Mantua, whom he found disposed as he could have wished, and soon prevailed upon him to adopt it in the most earnest manner. After every thing had been arranged for the execution of this project, it was thought proper to communicate the particulars to the king himself, to obtain his concurrence and co-operation. Count Alphonse Durfort, a French gentleman of known courage and fidelity, who was at that time at Mantua, was intrusted with this dangerous and very confidential service. At various interviews with the emperor, the whole particulars of the project were communicated to the count, who agreed to set out directly for Paris, and, as soon as he should have fulfilled his mission to the king, he was to return to the emperor with the king's acquiescence; for that was all that was required, and of it no doubt was entertained. The particulars of this project, consisting of twenty-one articles, were given to the count in writing; but he was desired to get them by heart, lest any intelligence he might receive, or any accident that might happen during the journey, should render it necessary to destroy the paper.

The first article expresses the general design, namely, the restoration of Lewis.*

* These articles, as far as the author of this work knows, were never before published. That they are authentic, he has the most complete conviction.

The second announces that the scheme was combined and supported by the emperor, the kings of Spain and Sardinia, the Swiss cantons, and the circles of the empire; and asserts that there were assurances from other powers of Europe that they would not oppose.

The third article is in the following words.—L'Empereur fera filer 35,000 hommes sur les frontières de Flandres et du Hainaut; à la même époque les troupes des cercles se porteront au nombre de 14,000 hommes au moins sur l'Alsace. Les Suisses en même nombre se présenteront sur la frontière du Lionnois et de la Franche Comté. Le roi de Sardaigne entrera en Dauphiné avec 15,000 hommes. L'Espagne a déjà rassemblé 12,000 hommes dans la Catalogne, et portera à 20,000 les troupes qui menaceront les provinces méridionales. Tous ces différens corps formeront une masse de 100,000 hommes, qui se portera divisée en cinq colonnes sur chacune des frontières auxquelles les différens etats correspondent. A ces armés se joindront les régiments restés fidèles, des volontaires armés dont on est sûr, et tous les mécontents des provinces qui n'attendent que du secours pour se déclarer.*

Article IV. L'Empereur est assuré des bonnes dispositions du roi de Prusse, et sa majesté impériale s'est chargée elle-même de la correspondance directe avec la cour de Berlin, &c.†

* The emperor will order 35,000 men to march to the frontiers of Flanders and Hainault; at the same time the troops of the circles, to the number of 14,000 at least, will march to Alsace. The same number of Swiss will march towards the Lionnois and Franche Comté. The king of Sardinia will enter into Dauphiné with 15,000 men. Spain has already 12,000 in Catalonia; and will augment to 20,000 the army which will threaten the southern provinces of France. Those different corps amount in all to 100,000; which being divided into five columns, will press on the different frontiers of France, next to the countries to which the columns belong. Those armies will be joined by such of the French regiments as have remained faithful, by some armed volunteers who may be depended upon, as well as all those in the provinces who are discontented with the present government, who will declare for the king as soon as the armies approach.

† The emperor is assured of the king of Prussia's good intentions, and has taken upon himself the direct correspondence with the court of Berlin.

Article V. On aura soin de tenir cette coalition secrete jusqu'au moment de l'explosion; c'est pourquoi on fera en sorte d'empêcher toute insurrection partielle dans l'intérieur.*

Article VI. La paix de la Russie et de la Turqui étant plus que probable dans le courant de Juillet, on n'aura pas à craindre les embarras que la guerre auroit pû occasionner.†

In the seventh article the reasons are mentioned at length for believing that one hundred thousand men will be more than sufficient: the principal is, that these armies are to be considered only as auxiliaries to the nobility, the troops, and the natives of France who will declare for the same cause as soon as the combined armies shall appear on the frontiers.

Article VIII. Every thing to be ready by the end of August. A protestation by all the branches of the Bourbon family, signed by the kings of Spain and Naples, and the prince of Parma, will be published. A manifesto of the emperor will appear soon after.

Article IX. Quoique l'empereur soit l'ame et le chef de l'entreprise, il seroit peutêtre dangereux pour la reine qu'il parût en être le premier mobile, et on ne manqueroit pas d'attribuer à la maison d'Autriche ce que l'assemblée s'efforcera de faire paroître odieux au peuple. C'est pourquoi, et du consentement de l'empereur, on aura soin de faire paroître avant tout, la protestation de la maison de Bourbon, et le manifeste de S. M. I. venant au secours des princes lezés, prennant la défense des têtes couronnées avec de plus grands moyens, n'en sera que plus imposant.‡

* Care will be taken to keep this coalition secret till the moment of explosion, for which purpose partial insurrections in the interior parts of the kingdom should be prevented.

† As a peace betwixt Russia and Turkey will in all probability take place in July, nothing is to be feared from the disorders which a continuation of that war might have occasioned.

‡ Although the emperor is the soul and chief of the enterprise, it might be dangerous for the queen that he should appear to be the first mover of it;

Articles X and XI entirely regard the protestation intended to be published in the name of the Bourbon family. The king and queen of Naples have seen it; and only wait until it shall be signed by the king of Spain, before they sign it.

Article XII. The king of Sardinia is in the best disposition; his troops are ready, and he only waits the signal from the emperor.

Article XIII. The diet of Ratisbon has not yet taken final resolutions.

Article XIV. The return of certain persons sent to other courts is expected, and the best hopes of their cooperation, or at least of their neutrality, is entertained.

Article XV. Every thing being thus arranged, the king and queen are entreated not to allow this plan to be disturbed by any new ideas, and that they will be very careful to whom they communicate any part of the scheme.

Article XVI. The king and queen are warned to place no confidence in M. La Fayette, and also not entirely to trust M. de Montmorin. Mention is made of the king's declaration to foreign courts by his ambassadors; that it had shocked many, but had not imposed on any person of discernment with regard to the king's *real* sentiments.

Article XVII relates to particular manœuvres intended to mislead people's conjectures as to the real design.

Article XVIII declares that a correspondence has been always kept up with various members of the French parliaments dispersed in different parts of Europe, who are to unite in the first considerable town of France that shall be in the power of the coalition; and there to compose a parliament, to establish forms, to pronounce the nullity of the decrees of the national assembly, to judge and condemn criminals, and that all possible eclat will be given to this court.

it; for whatever is most odious in the eyes of the people, or what the assembly can make appear so, will be imputed to the house of Austria. For this reason, with the emperor's consent, the protestation in the name of the house of Bourbon will appear in the first place; and then his imperial majesty's manifesto in favour of the injured princes, and in defence of all crowned heads, will appear with greater efficacy.

Article XIX. Quoique l'on ait desiré jusqu'à présent que leurs majestés puissent elles-mêmes se procurer leur liberté, la situation présente engage à les supplier très-instament de n'y plus songer : leur position est bien différente de ce qu'elle étoit avant le 18 Avril, avant que le roi eut été forcé d'aller à l'assemblée, et d'écrire la lettre aux ambassadeurs. L'unique objet dont leurs majestés doivent s'occuper est de ne rien negliger de ce qui peut discréditer l'assemblée, et d'employer tous les moyens possibles à augmenter leur popularité, pour en tirer parti quand le moment sera venu, et de manière que le peuple effrayé à l'entrée des armées étrangères en France ne voye son salut que dans sa soumission à l'autorité de S. M. Telle est l opinion de l'empereur; il attache uniquement à ce plan de conduite le succès des mesures qu'il adoptées, et il demande instamment qu'on éloigne toute autre idée. Ce qui arriveroit à leurs majestés si dans leur fuite elles ne pouvoient échapper a une surveillance barbare le fait fremir d'horreur. S. M. I. croit que la sauvegarde la plus sûre pour leurs majestés est une armée de 130,000 hommes précedée par des manifestes menaçans.*

* Although until this period it was to be wished that their majesties had been able to procure their liberty, yet in the present juncture they are entreated not to think of making any attempt for that purpose. Their situation is very different from what it was before the 18th of April, before the king was forced to go to the national assembly, and write the letter to the ambassadors.

The principal object which their majesties ought to attend to, is to neglect nothing which may bring discredit upon the assembly, and employ every means of augmenting their own popularity ; from which great benefit may be derived hereafter, when the people, terrified at the entrance of foreign troops into France, may see no safety but in submission to his majesty's authority.

This is the emperor's opinion ; and he rests all hopes of the success of his measures on this plan of conduct being adhered to. He earnestly entreats every other idea may be given up. The dreadful consequences to their majesties, which might follow an unsuccessful attempt to escape, cannot be thought of without horror. The emperor thinks that their majesties best security is in an army of 130,000 men, preceded by threatening manifestoes.

Article XX relates to the duc de Polignac, who was to carry on a correspondence with a person in the confidence of the emperor.

Article XXI recommends full confidence in the count Alphonse Durfort.

From the reception which the Prussian army met with when they attempted to penetrate into France the following year, many will imagine that this scheme of the emperor would have had no better success, had it been fairly tried; and possibly their conjecture is just. At the same time it must be acknowledged that there was more reason to expect success at the first period than at the second. The frontier towns were then more out of repair, worse provided in military stores, and more weakly garrisoned. The calumnies against the king had not made such impression on the minds of the people. Republican principals were not so widely diffused. The king had not fled from the capital, and undergone all those mortifications to which he was exposed after being stopped at Varennes, and during his return to Paris; circumstances which tended to lower him in the eyes of the populace more than all that had happened before.

But what would have been the effect of this project, had the king completely adopted it, and adhered to the injunctions expressed in the articles communicated to him by the count Durfort, cannot be known; for the unhappy prince, being in dread of the utmost violence from the increasing rancour of his enemies, at last listened to a proposal made to him by M. de Bouillé, who commanded the troops on the frontiers, to attempt to escape with his family out of the kingdom; or at least to Montmedi, a garrisoned town on the frontiers of France, adjoining to the duchy of Luxembourg. This plan had been long in preparation, and it is probable was known to the emperor, from the earnest manner in which the king is desired to abandon it in the 19th of the articles above enumerated; and there is reason to think that he did not agree to

this proposed flight, until to the dread of violence to his family and person a new inducement was added.

Beside the person above alluded to, there was another ex-minister of France who had also been obliged to fly the country. He was supposed to have enjoyed much of the queen's confidence; notwithstanding which, and his former eminent situation, the scheme adopted by the emperor for the re-establishment of the king's authority had been carefully concealed from him: but in spite of all the care he came to the knowledge of it, and actually procured a copy of the articles given to Count Durfurt. His former eminent situation in France, and the queen's confidence, which he still enjoyed, gave him a just claim, as it was most natural for him to think, to be consulted in whatever regarded the king's restoration; and the design of excluding him from any part in a measure of so much importance, could not fail to exasperate him against the person whom he thought the cause of this exclusion. Whether he was at all actuated by resentment, or entirely from a persuasion that M. de Bouillé's plan was preferable, he knows best; but it is believed that he found means to prepossess the queen so strongly in favour of the plan proposed by M. de Bouillé, that she prevailed on the king to persevere in it, and to reject the other when it was afterwards communicated to him by the count Durfort.

There is one consideration which seems not to have occurred to those ministers, namely, that in adopting either of their plans the king would be considered as having broken the oath he had taken to continue faithful to the constitution; and that, after the declaration made by his ambassadors at foreign courts, announced by his minister in the assembly, this conduct would appear deceitful in the highest degree to the nation.

That those two ministers were sincere in their wishes for the restoration of the king's authority will not be disputed. The point on which they differed was, which of them should have the honour of doing it. But as this

was a point of no manner of importance to their royal master, provided it was done at all, some people blame the one for concealing from the other the plan agreed to by the emperor for that purpose; and different people blame that other for counteracting it by the advice he sent to the queen. And thus it is insinuated that those two ministers were influenced by jealousy and selfish motives, instead of sacrificing all considerations to the great object of serving the king. This construction seems too severe; but whether it be so or not, no inference can be drawn to the disadvantage of any existing minister in any country of Europe; for, even if it could be proved that the two ministers in question were influenced by motives of interest or ambition, more than by regard for their sovereign, it ought to be remembered that they were both out of place; and that nothing is more different than the sentiments of ministers out of place from those of ministers who are in.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Royal Family escape from Paris—are stopped at Varennes —Various Incidents on that occasion—They are obliged to return to Paris—Reflections.

In consequence of the plan formed by M. de Bouillé for the escape of the royal family, the king and queen, without any attendant, came, on the 11th of June, to the apartment of madame de Rochereuil, a lady in the queen's service; and, after examining the rooms and their communications minutely, informed her that they were needed for another person. This apartment communicated by a corridor with the queen's.

On the 17th, as M. Dumoustier, who had formerly belonged to the garde-du-corps, was walking alone in the garden of the Tuilleries, a person whom he did not know accosted him, and desired that he would follow him into the palace. Dumoustier was directly conducted to the

king, to whom he had never before had the honour of speaking. His majesty desired that he might order for himself, and for Messrs. Maldent and Valory, two of his old companions, three couriers jackets of a yellow colour; and that he should walk the same evening on the quay of the Pont Royal, where he would be joined by a person who would give him farther instructions.

All these directions were carefully attended to; and, in consequence of the instructions given to Dumoustier by the unknown person at the quay, Valory went on the 20th to Bondy to order horses and wait there for the king. Dumoustier was at the Porte Saint Martin with a coach and four. A coach with only two horses arrived about eleven in the Cour des Princes. M. Maldent entered the palace privately at nine in the evening, and was conducted into a small chamber, where he remained until near twelve. Nothing extraordinary was observed in the appearance or conduct of any of the royal family. They retired at their usual hour; and the usual orders were given for the following day.

The queen then gave orders that the prince and princess royal should be dressed, and conducted to a room where she herself was with the king and the princess Elizabeth. There were besides two unknown men, one of whom immediately was directed to conduct the two female attendants on the prince and princess royal to a chaise which was found waiting for them on the Quai Voltaire. Having placed them in the carriage, their conductor withdrew; and the ladies were driven to Claye. The other unknown person accompanied the prince and princess royal and Madame de Tourzel by the apartment of Madame de Rouchereuil into the Cour des Princes; where having entered the coach with two horses, they were driven to the Carousel, and soon joined by the queen and the princess Elizabeth who came together without any attendant, and were helped into the carriage by the coachman. The king came last, attended by M. Maldent who mounted behind the coach, which was immediately driven to the Porte

Saint Martin; and having exchanged it for the carriage with four horses which awaited them under the care of M. Dumoustier, they were all driven to Bondy, where M. Valory had horses in readiness. The chaise with the two ladies joined them on the road. Although they came out of the carriage at some of the post-houses, and the king conversed familiarly and with apparent ease with several persons he met there, they were not once suspected to be other than the characters they assumed, until they arrived at St. Menehould, about 170 miles from Paris—a town since distinguished by the memorable stand made by the French under the command of Dumourier.

Monsieur the king's brother and his consort were comprehended in M. de Bouillé's plan. They left the palace of Luxembourg about the same time that the king and queen left the Tuilleries; but it was agreed for various reasons that they should take a different road; and accordingly directing their course by Flanders, they arrived safely at Mons.

The king and queen were not so fortunate, though at this place they may naturally be supposed to have thought all their own danger over, to have been solicitous only about that of monsieur and madame, and wishing them the same good fortune with themselves. Drouet, the postmaster at St. Menehould, had never seen either the king or queen; but he had seen a portrait of her majesty, and was struck with the resemblance of that portrait to his guest, the pretended Baroness Kroff, which was the name the queen had assumed. This, however, might have passed without making much impression, had not he recollected that two detachments, the one of hussars, and the other of dragoons, had arrived the same day at St. Menehould. The former had already left the town; the latter were still in it. While he was ruminating on this circumstance, which he thought a little extraordinary, he observed the officer who commanded the dragoons speaking to one of the couriers in a manner somewhat mysterious, while the other couriers, having paid the former postilions too li-

berally, were impatiently pushing the new ones to make haste. These observations revived the suspicions which the sight of the queen had raised in the mind of Drouet; but still they did not form a presumption strong enough to justify him in stopping the carriages, which were allowed to proceed. But soon after their departure, when Drouet perceived that the dragoons were preparing to follow them, his suspicions amounting in his mind to a certainty, without farther hesitation he called *To arms!* asserting that it certainly was the royal family that had just passed; that it was the duty of good citizens to prevent their going out of the kingdom; and he instigated all around to hinder the dragoons from following the carriages. Drouet was believed in his assertions; and, what seems a little unaccountable, his directions were literally followed. The whole detachment of dragoons remained passive, instead of silencing Drouet, and riding after the king, as might have been expected. Drouet, with a person of the name of Guillaume, set out on horseback with all expedition to Clermont, and was there informed, that instead of going to Metz, as the couriers who attended the carriages had given out, they had taken the road to Varennes, on which he and his companion by a cross road, impracticable to carriages, went to that place, and arrived at the inn of the Bras d'Or some minutes before the king.

They informed Le Blanc, the innkeeper, that two carriages were on the point of arriving with the king and royal family, who were secretly withdrawing from the kingdom; that it was every body's duty to stop them; and there was not a moment to be lost. Le Blanc immediately ran with this intelligence to the procureur syndic, who acted as chief magistrate in the absence of the mayor, who being a member of the national assembly was then at Paris. The procureur sent his servants to rouse all the municipal officers, the national guards belonging to the town, and the inhabitants in general. Drouet and Guillaume dragged a loaded waggon which they perceived in the street, and overset it across the bridge, to ob-

struct the passage of the carriages in case they attempted to proceed by force through the town. Le Blanc with his brother returned to the inn, armed themselves, and with a few followers met the carriages, and ordered them to stop. The postilions were continuing to proceed. They were threatened to be fired upon. 'We are all good patriots,' cried the couriers, 'provided with regular passports for Frankfort. '*Patriotes ou non*,' replied Le Blanc, '*pied à terre*.' The procureur syndic then approached the carriage which was drawn by six horses, followed by three servants on horseback, the three couriers in yellow jackets being on the coach-box. He was presented with a passport for the baroness Kroff, her family and attendants, going to Frankfort. It was signed *Louis*, and beneath *Montmorin*. The magistrate, without discovering that he had any suspicion of the persons, alleged that it was too late to examine the passport, it being then midnight; that the roads were very bad, and that it would be dangerous in many respects for them to attempt to go on before day-break; and he offered to accommodate the whole company in his own house until then. This offer was accepted, partly from a dread of the consequence of attempting to proceed by force, and partly from an expectation that the arrival of troops would oblige the magistrates to submit in their turn.

Soon after a party of hussars, commanded by an aide-de-camp of M. de Bouillé, arrived. They drew up before the procureur's house. This magistrate, not being as yet absolutely certain that his guests were in reality the royal family, went to the house of M. de Lon, a judge, who had seen the king, and begged that he would accompany him back to ascertain the point, which the judge agreed to. On his return the procureur, addressing the officer who commanded the hussars, said, 'that as there was reason to think it was the king whom they had stopped, it was hoped that he and his men were too good citizens not to lend their aid to prevent his withdrawing out of the kingdom.'

The procureur then ascended with M. de Lon into the chamber where the royal family were; the instant that De Lon threw his eyes on the king, he signified by an expressive look to the magistrate that it was unquestionably he.

The unhappy prince, having observed this, thought that all farther dissimulation would be vain; turning therefore with great emotion to the procureur, he said,—'Oui, je suis votre roi. Placé dans la capitale au milieu des poignards et des bayonnettes, je viens chercher en province, au milieu de mes fideles sujets, la liberté et la paix dont vous jouissez tous. Je ne puis plus rester à Paris sans y mourir, ma famille et moi.'*

He concluded this affecting address by conjuring the magistrate and those around to assist him in making his escape. The procureur replied, that he had sworn to be faithful to the nation, the law, and his majesty; and that in his own opinion he should betray all three by doing what was required. He begged therefore that the king would give over thoughts of proceeding farther, and would consent to return to the capital. The queen, shocked with the idea of being dragged back to Paris, taking the dauphin in her arms, in the most pathetic terms conjured the magistrate, and all who heard her, to save the lives of their king and his children by assisting them to escape: for that misery and ruin awaited them at the capital.

But the procureur and others continuing to urge the necessity of their returning, the king declared, 'that he had no design to withdraw from the kingdom; that his intention was to go no farther than to Montmedi; that the national guards might accompany him; and that he had a right by the constitution to travel within the kingdom without controul.' They showed him the decree by

* Yes, I am your king. Being surrounded in the capital by daggers and bayonets, I come to my faithful subjects of this province in search of that liberty and safety which you all enjoy. My family and I were in continual danger of being murdered at Paris.

which he was obliged never to go to a greater distance than twenty leagues from the national assembly. The officer who commanded the national guards observing that the hussars were ordered to perform some evolutions, suspected there was an intention of seizing the cannon which pointed on the procureur's house. He therefore made them be moved to the extremities of the street, and guarded by strong parties of his men; by which manœuvre the hussars were placed between two batteries. The officer who commanded the hussars attempting to move his detachment out of this situation, it was imagined that he intended to go in search of other troops of cavalry, which were supposed to be on the road, and then to return in greater force. On this suspicion the major of the national guard refused to let them pass. Their commanding officer struck at the major with his sabre; the other avoided the stroke, fired his pistol, and wounded the dragoon officer. This combat took place in sight of the whole party of hussars, who remained passive spectators; and when their officer was carried into a house on account of his wound, they demanded that an officer of the national guards might be appointed to command them. In whatever intention these hussars had come to Varennes, it is evident from their conduct that they were at this period more inclined to join the citizens than to obey their officer; they had probably been gained over by the national guards immediately after they entered the town.

During these transactions, the procureur, the judge, and the municipal officers were endeavouring to persuade the king to return to the capital; to which both he and the queen expressed the greatest aversion. One of the national gendarmerie suddenly arrived; he said he had escaped a thousand chances of being stopped; for that many parties of cavalry patrolled the roads near the town, and that the son of general de Bouillé was at no great distance with a body of troops. Soon after an aide-de-camp of M. La Fayette arrived. He brought orders from the national assembly, which he presented to the

king. He represented to him the universal uneasiness which his withdrawing had occasioned at the capital, and the danger of his removing so near the frontiers. The king repeated his former assertions, that he never intended to go out of France; 'that his plan was to go no farther than Montmedi—there he would be out of the power of a set of men who misled the populace of Paris, who overawed the national assembly, and seemed bent on his ruin, that of the monarchy, and of the French nation. That when he and his family should be safe at Montmedi, the people of France would have it in their power to manifest their real inclination with regard to him, and also with regard to those leaders of the populace of Paris, who, by having their king and his family in their hands, expected to enslave them and tyrannize over the whole kingdom.' And he again insisted on proceeding on his journey, inviting the procureur and national guards to accompany him. The answer to all this was a repetition of the former entreaties that his majesty would return to Paris. M. Mangin, a surgeon, with twelve or fourteen of the inhabitants on horseback, had with wonderful zeal and activity rode around all the villages near Varennes propagating the news, and animating the people to hasten to the assistance of the magistrates; and, as the morning was now beginning to break, they brought accounts of parties of cavalry that had been seen in the neighbourhood. Those accounts were soon after verified by an attempt made by one party to enter the town, who were repulsed by the national guards. It was now thought dangerous to retain the royal family any longer so near the frontiers; and instead of the entreaties which had been hitherto used to induce the king to return to the capital, a steady declaration was made to him of the absolute necessity of his complying with that measure.

The royal family were obliged to set out, guarded by a numerous band of national guards, and accompanied by the municipal officers of Varennes. The march was hardly commenced when a considerable body of troops, parti-

cularly a detachment of the regiment of royal Allemand, were seen on a height at no great distance; they seemed to meditate an attack; on observing the steady countenance of the escort they desisted.

A party of hussars, however, commanded by the son of General Bouillé, attempted to pass a river, with a view to have intercepted the national guards, or to harass and retard them in their march, until such time as all the detachments of cavalry which were on the road joining, they might be able to rescue the king; but in this attempt he failed.

It will be thought that the movements of so many troops might have created suspicion that some extraordinary project was carrying on; but M. de Bouillé had precluded any surprise on that account, by a public declaration sometime before, that the circumstances of the times rendered an encampment near Montmedi highly expedient. He had gone himself on the 18th of June, and with several officers had reconnoitred the ground on which the camp was to be pitched, and had given orders for a great quantity of bread to be baked and in readiness for the troops. He had reviewed the regiment of royal Allemand at Stenay, and been very liberal in his praises both of officers and men; and, on the pretext of a valuable treasure being to pass that way, he ordered detachments of dragoons and hussars to patrol from the first post, after passing Chalons on the road from Paris, all the way to Montmedi. Those detachments were all commanded by chosen and confidential officers, who were authorized to inform the troops under their command that it was the king they were protecting, at any time when they should think such information necessary. Their orders also were that, when they had seen the royal carriages pass, each detachment was at a proper distance to follow, and cover their escape all the way to Montmedi, where the whole were to rendezvous, and join the troops which would be found there. So that the plan seems to have been contrived with judgment, and executed with

address, until the arrival of the royal family at St. Menehould and Varennes. It is thought that Drouet might have been seized by the dragoons at St. Menehould, and prevented from raising the country; that the hussars at Varennes might have cleared the way for the carriages, and enabled them to proceed before the national guards were assembled in force. It is said that the officer who commanded them proposed this, but was prevented by the king. It is also believed by some, that if all the detachments on the road had joined that of the royal Allemand which appeared in the heights between Varennes and Clermont, and had made a brisk attack on the national guards, they might even then have rescued the royal family, and conducted them to Montmedi. A dread of endangering the lives of the king and queen, it is probable, prevented any of those attempts from being made.

What rendered the failure of M. de Bouillé's plan more vexatious as well as more surprising is, that almost all the difficulties were fortunately surmounted, and it was on the point of succeeding when it was blasted. By much the greatest difficulty was to get the royal family clear out of the Tuilleries and Louvre, at a time when there was so great a suspicion of their intending to escape, and so many persons placed near them merely for the purpose of watching their conduct; and next to this it was most difficult to get them out of Paris. These, however, were happily accomplished; but still there was great reason to dread that some of the party would be known by the people at the post-houses near the capital. *That* also was happily avoided; and they arrived, without creating the least suspicion, not only to such a distance as infinitely diminished the chance of being known by the people at the post-houses, but also at a part of the country where such a number of troops were stationed for their protection as, it might have been thought, would have prevented them from being stopped, even although they should have been known. It seems likewise surprising, that a project so well combined, and the execution of which was intrust-

ed to chosen men, mostly of the military profession, and whose interest, honour, and lives, were all strongly involved in its success, should have been frustrated by men unconnected with and unknown to each other, who had no particular interest in the matter. What renders this still more remarkable is, that the natural inclination of the heart is to assist those who are obliged to fly or conceal themselves to save their lives, and to consider those who betray them as worthless men. The supposed guilt of the fugitive will not save their betrayers from the imputation. They will be put on a footing with the odious and despicable class of spies and informers which certain governments employ—a set of wretches who, despised even by those who hire them, attend coffeehouses and public meetings on purpose to catch unguarded expressions, to pervert, and to betray. In vain do such characters endeavour to skreen themselves from hatred, by pleading their utility, and the support they give to government. These pleas may be urged with more force in favour of hangmen, but cannot render the profession less disgraceful.

The bias of the human heart to assist the unfortunate who are flying to save their lives, is strongest when the fugitives are of a tender age, the weaker sex, or of royal rank. All those motives were combined on the present occasion.

Of the great number of persons of both sexes who were privy to the concealment and escape of Charles II after the battle of Worcester, several of whom discovered the king by accident, and without having been intrusted with the secret, it is probable that some were no great friends to royalty, yet every one was faithful and zealous to assist the unhappy prince in his escape, although death was denounced against all who concealed him, and a great reward proclaimed to those who should arrest him. Thirty thousand pounds of reward was offered by government to any one who should deliver up the prince pretender, or give information where he was concealed, when he was

lurking in the Highlands of Scotland, after the battle of Culloden. The wealth of the Indies would not have bribed the poorest Highlander in Scotland to have done what would have rendered him in the eyes of his countrymen, and in his own, for ever infamous. And many who were enemies to the cause of that unfortunate person, rejected the idea of stopping him in his flight, or betraying him into the hands of his pursuers.

It will be said that the cases are different, and it must be acknowledged they are so; in the two last mentioned certain death attended the fugitives if stopped, which was not to be apprehended in the other. Nobody could have stopped Charles II or the young pretender from a good motive; their armies were dispersed, and there was no reason for preventing their escape, except to have them put to death and to get the reward. Lewis, it will be said, was flying to raise a civil war, and to plunge the nation again into slavery. Yet, after every allowance of this kind, it will be thought that humane and well-disposed villagers would have been more affected by the affliction of the royal family than by such remote consequences. They saw the king and queen in an agony of dread at the thoughts of being detained, which it might have been expected would have damped the inclination to arrest and carry them back to Paris. The fact was, it did not; the whole country shewed eagerness and activity to both; which is a strong proof of the mistake of those who strenuously asserted, that however much the revolution might be liked by the Parisians, it was hated by the people at large. And the disposition of the inhabitants of this particular part of France might have indicated to the Prussians who invaded it by the same quarter soon after, in the hopes of being joined and assisted by the natives, what kind of junction and assistance they had reason to expect.

It was imagined that the preventing the escape of the royal family would have precluded many evils which otherwise were likely to happen. It is hardly possible, how-

ever, to conceive that more mischief and misery could have taken place in any supposable event than has actually happened. The person indeed to whom the most dreadful portion of those calamities is to be imputed, was a member of the constituent assembly; but his influence there was small, and there was little probability that such a pale emaciated weakly being as Robespierre was to become the giant of the revolution, and have it in his power to gratify a thirst for blood as insatiable as that attributed to any monster of the same race recorded in history or fable.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Conduct of the National Assembly—Of the Parisian Populace—The King and Queen examined by Commissioners from the Assembly—Suspension of the King from his Public Functions—Universal Discussions—Le Républicain—M. de Condorcet—M. Brissot—Robespierre.

About eight in the morning of the 21st June the flight of the royal family was known at Paris. The cannon placed near the statue of Henry IV were fired, the tocsin sounded, and the national guards were summoned to assemble under arms at the places of rendezvous of their sections. The news spread rapidly; the people hurried from all quarters to the gardens of the Tuilleries and of the Luxembourg; the first sensation was surprise; that was soon converted into indignation against the fugitives. All signs with the portraits of the king or queen, all emblems of royalty, were torn down and trampled under foot. The section of the Luxembourg ordered a banner, which they had received as a present from monsieur, to be publicly torn in pieces; a man was obliged to erase his name from above his shop because he was called Louis. The officer who commanded the guard at the Tuilleries was in danger of falling a victim to the first impulse of popular fury; which in France is more blind, precipitate,

and bloody, than in any other country. He was saved by the interposition of the national guards; who at this time consisted of the most respectable tradespeople of Paris, and were more under the controul of discipline and reason than the mob of St. Antoine.

The steady and prudent conduct of the national assembly had great effect in preventing the disorders which were to be dreaded, in a turbulent city like Paris, from such an event as the king's withdrawing. They ordained that the decrees of the assembly should immediately have the force of law, and that the minister of justice should apply the seal of the state to them without farther sanction or ceremony. They decreed that the national guards should remain under arms immovable, until they received orders from those authorized by the assembly. They ordered the ministers of state to the bar, to receive instructions from the assembly. They dispatched couriers to all the departments with orders to the magistrates and commanding officers of the line and national guards to stop all travellers, to prevent any person from going out of the kingdom, and to preserve tranquillity. They prescribed a new oath of fidelity to all the military, by which they engaged to obey no orders but those given in consequence of decrees of the assembly; and that they would never permit an invasion of the French territory by foreigners.

M. de la Fayette, having been in some danger from the populace, was protected by the national guards; and when it was announced that he waited the orders of the assembly, some insinuations were thrown out to his disadvantage. These were repelled by M. Barnave, who shewed the danger and injustice of countenancing suspicions without good grounds; adding, that La Fayette had proved himself the friend of liberty from the beginning of the revolution, and merited the utmost confidence of the assembly. He was accordingly confirmed in the command of the national guards. This behaviour was the more ge-

nerous on the part of Barnave, because he and La Fayette had been for some time before on ill terms.

The new oath was taken in the assembly by Messrs. de Rochambeau, La Fayette, D'Affry, and all the officers of the line, as well as of the Swiss and national guards then in Paris.

On the morning after his departure a paper was delivered to M. de la Port, intendant of the king's household, with directions that he should carry it to the national assembly. It contained an address to the French nation, written entirely by the king himself, in which he complains of the assembly, gives the reasons of his withdrawing from a city where he was not free, where his life was in danger, and enumerates facts to prove those assertions. The king on this occasion does not seem to have sufficiently reflected on the danger to which he exposed an old and faithful servant by this dangerous commission, as the assembly might have been so irritated at the king's flight, and at his seeming dislike of the constitution, notwithstanding his late declaration to foreign courts, as to have wreaked their anger on M. de la Port, whom it was natural for them to have suspected of having been privy to or assisting in his flight. They immediately ordered the declaration to be read, and listened with profound attention and without any interruption. It was ordered to be printed and published. A proclamation, of which the following is a translation, was soon after made in all the public places and streets of Paris.—

'The national assembly declares to the citizens of Paris and to all the empire, that the same courage which has conducted the assembly in the most difficult circumstances will not abandon it at this emergency. The most speedy and effectual measures have been taken to stop the flight of the king. The assembly are to continue their sittings without interruption; and the citizens of Paris are required to hold themselves in readiness to march at the first notice.'

The president then informed the assembly, that an officer of the national guards had brought a letter addressed to the queen, which had been intercepted; but that he doubted if even the present situation of affairs would justify a breach of public confidence, or entitle them to open it. It was universally agreed that it should not be opened.

When those resolutions which were thought most pressingly necessary had been decreed, M. Beauharnois the president said, 'If no member has any thing farther to propose, we may pass to the order of the day.'

The assembly immediately resumed the discussion of the penal code, in which they had been employed before the king's flight was known. An answer to the declaration which the king had left behind him, and which had been read in the assembly, was ordered to be made by a committee. It was addressed, like the other, to the French nation. Being approved by the assembly, it was immediately published and dispersed all over France. The following is the last paragraph.—'Il est, envers les grandes nations, des attentats que la générosité seule peut faire oublier. Le peuple François etoit fier dans la servitude. Il montrera les vertus et l'héroisme de la liberté. Que les ennemis de la constitution le sachent; pour asservir de nouveau le territoire de cet empire, il faudroit anéantir la nation. Le despotisme formera, s'il le veut, une pareille entreprise: il sera vaincu; ou, à la suite de son affreux triomphe, il ne trouvera que des ruines.'*

The tragedy of Brutus was acted at one of the theatres, and the people allowed to enter gratis. This could be done with no other view than that of inflaming their minds with republican ideas. Handbills abusive of the royal

* There are certain crimes against a great nation, which nothing but generosity can forgive. The French people displayed a proud spirit even when they were in servitude. They will now display the virtues and the heroism of liberty. Let the enemies of the constitution be aware of this: to reduce this country again to slavery, the nation must be annihilated. Let despotism form that project, if it pleases. It will either be defeated, or after its horrible triumph nothing but ruins will be found.

family were circulated, and a pamphlet entitled 'Mémoires du *ci-devant roi*' was vociferated through the streets.

The undisturbed countenance maintained by the national assembly removed the consternation which, at the first news of the king's flight, had filled the minds of many of the citizens. The town of Paris remained in unexpected tranquillity. The greatest agitation proceeded from the eagerness with which the inhabitants related the circumstances of the escape; for, as all had in a short time received *some* account, there were more relaters than listeners; each endeavouring to snatch the narrative out of the mouth of the other, and insisting that *her* edition was the most genuine. Towards the evening of the 23d, the subject began to grow stale. It had already maintained its ground as a topic of universal conversation several hours longer than any thing was ever known to have done at Paris. At last it appeared to languish: other subjects of greater novelty began to shove it off the tapis; and it is believed by those who were at Paris at the time, that the flight of the royal family would have been little spoken of on the 25th of June, if the news had not arrived about nine of the evening of the 23d, that they had been stopped at Varennes. This was first brought to Paris by M. Mangin, the surgeon above mentioned. As soon as the national assembly had received this intelligence, they decreed that immediate measures should be taken for the protection of the king, the heir of the throne, and the rest of the royal family; that Messrs. Latour-Maubourg, Petion, and Barnave, all members of the national assembly, should set out directly to meet them, with full powers to order whatever they should think necessary for the security and accommodation of the royal family; the assembly particularly recommending to them to be attentive in preserving all the respect due to the royal dignity. M. Dumas, the adjutant-general of the army, was ordered to accompany them, and see the orders of the commissioners put in execution. The commissioners set out with all expedition, and met the royal

family at Epernay, about twenty miles from Chalons on the side next to Paris. Having read to the king the decree of the national assembly, the three commissioners placed themselves in the same carriage with the king and the queen, and proceeded to Meux. The king's journey from Varennes to Epernay, independent of the circumstance of its being against his will, had been most oppressive from the excessive heat of the weather, from the crowds that flocked round the carriage, and from the slowness; for, as the guards were on foot, the horses were allowed to move no faster than the soldiers could march. But as there still were rumours of the danger of a rescue, the commissioners, ordering the infantry to remain behind, the royal family were attended for the rest of the journey by cavalry only, by which means their misery was somewhat shortened.

As the sad procession moved through Paris to the Tuilleries, the streets were crowded with the populace; some of whom taking off their hats as the royal family approached, the insulting order, '*Chapeau sur la tête, que personne ne se decouvre*,' was heard and obeyed.* On the seat of the king's carriage the three gardes-du-corps, who had acted as couriers, were seated with their arms bound; and the carriage was followed by an open cabriolet, in which Drouet was placed, crowned with laurel.

This was the third time that the Parisian mob had, within a short period, been gratified with the spectacle of their sovereign dragged as a prisoner through their city; but this was by much the most deplorable of the three. Ever since the day that Perseus the last king of Macedon and his family were carried through the streets of Rome before the triumphal car of Paulus Emilius, no scene so humiliating to royalty has been exhibited in the world.

* This seems to be rather a deviation from the spirit of the decree of the assembly, ordaining the commissioners above all things to be attentive that the respect due to the royal dignity should be preserved.

Among other differences which may exist between the characters of the Roman and the French victors, the former, as history informs us, was so much affected with the fate of the Macedonian monarch, that he shed tears when he first received him as a prisoner. No similar weakness is recorded of Drouet.

When the unfortunate family of France arrived at the Tuilleries, the gardens were full. Some were present who had the feelings of men. Turning with sudden emotion from the sight of the king and queen, their eyes fell on the duke of Orleans; who, in a circle of deputies at a small distance, seemed to be a gay spectator of the melancholy scene.

As the faithful gardes-du-corps were untied from the coach-box, they were threatened with being instantly torn in pieces by the savage fury of the populace. The commissioners were obliged to beg that such an outrage might not be executed before the faces of the royal family; but that the criminals might be reserved for the just sentence of the law. As this was not renouncing but only postponing a pleasure, the request of the commissioners was granted.

The unhappy family were again lodged in the Tuilleries, under the responsibility of M. de la Fayette. Several tents were pitched in the garden, and all the avenues were occupied by national guards under his command. He has been greatly censured for the strictness with which the orders of the assembly were obeyed in this particular. Considering the recent escape of the royal family, the danger which he himself had been in, and the suspicions which still existed against him, it is not surprising that he should have been as attentive as possible to prevent a repetition of the same event.

The following day, commissioners appointed by the assembly waited on the king, to take his declaration in writing respecting his motives for having withdrawn from the capital.

His majesty assigned as his principal motives, 'the in-

sults he and his family had received, and the danger he conceived them to be in from those insults not having been punished: That his design was not to go out of the kingdom, but only to repair to Montmedi, where he would have been better situated than in the capital for opposing the attempts of foreign powers, and from whence he could have with ease repaired to any other part of the frontiers where his presence might have been requisite: That another object he had in view was to ascertain what the real disposition of the nation was respecting the constitution; which had been variously represented to him, but which he now knew to be decidedly in its favour: That he wished to prove to France and all Europe that he was at liberty; and not a prisoner, as was believed by many: That as he had it not in his power to quit Paris publicly, he had left it secretly; but without any concert with foreign powers, with his own relations, or any French emigrant: That he had ordered the three persons who had accompanied him as couriers to provide themselves with travelling jackets, because they were to be sent with dispatches; and that he had not communicated any thing more to them until the day of their departure: That the passport was obtained for a foreign country, because there are none given for travelling within the kingdom: That if he had intended to go out of the kingdom, he would not have ordered his memorial addressed to the French nation to be made public the day after leaving the Tuileries, but would have delayed until he had at least passed the frontiers.'

In the difficult situation in which Lewis was placed, there were more of his well-wishers who excused than believed every article of this declaration; by his enemies it was represented as a continued prevarication.

The commissioners next waited on the queen, who likewise signed a declaration importing, 'then when she saw that the king was resolved to quit the capital with his children, no consideration would have prevailed on her not to accompany him; but that she did it the more will-

ingly on account of his positive assurances that he would not go out of the kingdom: that if he had had any such intention, she would have used all her influence to have turned him from it.' The rest of her declaration shews her anxiety to exculpate the female attendants and the couriers, asserting that they had no previous knowledge of the destination or object of their journey.

When the first part of this declaration was read in the national assembly, some of the deputies burst into an indecent laugh. Long before the French had any wish to become republicans, and to affect roughness of manners as suitable to that character, many of them had lost a great part of that decorum and politeness for which the nation in general was so much distinguished. During the interval between the return of the king from Varennes, and his acceptance of the constitution, an officer of the national guards played at fives one day with the dauphin to amuse the child, in the presence of the queen. The officer striking the ball obliquely, it had very near hit her; on which, by way of apology, he politely exclaimed, 'Eh, mon Dieu! ma boule va tout de travers comme l'ancien regime.'

The question, whether the king was subject to trial or punishment, was under discussion at this period all over France, but particularly in the capital. The humiliating state in which the king had been exhibited to the eyes of the populace, from the time he was arrested at Varennes until his return to Paris, had tended more to lower their esteem than to raise their compassion for their unfortunate sovereign; and great pains had been taken to represent his flight as a proof of his profound dissimulation, as a breach of the oath he had taken to support the constitution, and as a strong presumption of his intention to join the foreign forces and the emigrants who were supposed to be then preparing to invade France. *Le roi, peut-il être mis en jugement?* became the universal topic of discourse, and a question on which every scribbler thought he had as good a right to publish *son opi-*

sion, as any member of the national assembly. On the whole, the voices went greatly against the king. Some enthusiasts thought the existence of any degree of freedom in France depended on his being immediately dethroned. Others who cared little about the matter, joined from mere wantonness in the clamour; which, as it was agreeable to the wishes, was supposed to be encouraged and excited by the adherents of the duke of Orleans, who expected that he would be appointed regent during the minority of the dauphin; for, even on the supposition of Lewis XVI being divested of the crown, there was hardly any idea of its not being immediately placed on the head of another.

Republican principles had made little progress at this period in France. But there happened to be a small band of determined republicans in the capital; the most distinguished were the marquis of Condorcet, Brissot, and Thomas Paine; none of them were members of the constituent assembly. Those men thought the present moment favourable for spreading their opinions; and were not without hopes that they might improve the present rage for the *déchéance*, into a passion for a republican form of government. With this view they formed themselves into a society, and published a periodical paper to which all occasionally contributed, entitled *Le Républicain*, ou *Le Défenseur du Gouvernement Représentatif*. In the very first number of this work they unfold their design with the greatest openness; observing that the calmness in which the inhabitants of Paris had remained during the absence of the king was a proof ' que l'absence d'un roi vaut mieux que sa présence, et qu'il n'est pas seulement une superfluité politique, mais encore un fardeau très-lourd qui pese sur toute la nation.

' Il a abdiqué, il a déserté son poste dans le gouvernement. L'abdication, la désertion sont caractérisées, non par la longueur de l'absence, mais par le seul acte de la fuite; ici l'acte est tout, et le temps n'est rien. Nous

ne le connoissons plus que comme un individu dans la foule, M. Louis Bourbon.'

Soon after the appearance of this paper, the famous abbé Sieyes published some answers to the arguments adduced in it, and declared his intention of supporting what he calls 'l'Opinion Monarchique contre le Systême Républicain.' All the abbé's celebrity for metaphysical acuteness did not intimidate Thomas Paine from accepting the challenge, declaring that he was so convinced of the superiority of his own system, that he would occupy no more than fifty pages in proving it, leaving his antagonist the liberty of taking as many pages as he pleased to refute his arguments.* It is not known whether it was the succeeding events of the revolution, or the arguments of Thomas Paine, that had most influence with the abbé; but it is certain that he has renounced l'Opinion Monarchique, and is now devoted to the Systême Républicain, to which it is not doubted that he will adhere, until events as extraordinary or arguments more powerful convince him of his present error, and oblige him to return to his ancient creed.

In a paper written by Condorcet, he endeavours to refute that just and powerful argument in favour of monarchical government, namely, that a legal king is the best security against a tyrant; because a power that is understood and is limited by the articles of the constitution is less formidable than the usurped and undefined power of ambitious citizens; and also because the ascertained power of a hereditary king is the most effectual means of precluding their hopes and stopping their ambitious views. Among other arguments to prove that there is less danger of this now than there was in the days of Sylla and Cæsar, of Guise or Cromwell, he insists that the art of printing, the liberty of the press, and the great number of newspapers, will with certainty preserve mankind

* The papers written by Thomas Paine for this work were translated into French by the marchioness of Condorcet.

from similar usurpations in future. 'Pour tout homme qui a lu avec attention,' said Condorcet, 'l'histoire de l'usurpation de Cromwell, il est évident qu'une seule gazette eut suffi pour en arrêter le succès; il est évident que si le peuple d'Angleterre eût su lire d'autres livres que la bible, l'hypocrite, démasqué dès ses premiers pas, eut bientôt cessé d'être dangereux.'*

The unhappy Condorcet lived to see this argument refuted by Robespierre, who, in spite of all the newspapers in France, usurped despotic power, shed more blood than all the French kings since Charles IX, and whose tyranny was not put an end to by the art of printing.

Brissot was not so elegant a writer as Condorcet, but with less genius he possessed more ardour in the cause in which he engaged. His love of freedom, as he himself hints, he caught in his early youth from the conversation of Englishmen. 'Le hazard amena deux Anglois dans ma patrie; j'appris l'Anglois, et cette circonstance à decidé de mon sort.'†

His mind was fired with admiration of the ancient republics; but having little expectation of seeing his favourite system established in France, he went to America, with a view to examine whether he could find a tolerable establishment there, and in the intention of carrying his wife and family to that country if he found a situation to his mind. The revolution began in this interval. He immediately returned to France; and, unfortunately for him, abandoning the project of carrying his family to America, he endeavoured with all possible assiduity to diffuse among his own countrymen those principles and sentiments which were confirmed in his mind by his residence in America. Brissot was more formed for specu-

* It is evident to every man who has read with attention the history of the usurpation of Cromwell, that a single newspaper would have prevented its success. Had the English of those days been in the habit of reading other books besides the bible, the hypocrite would have been unmasked and no longer dangerous.

† Reponse de Jacques-Pierre Brissot a tous les libellistes qui ont attaqué et attaquent sa Vie passée.

lation than for action; and from a want of experience he did not give proper weight to the difficulties that stood in the way of the plans to which his affections were attached, and with which his imagination was enamoured. Had he adhered to his early design, which he himself informs us was to 'inoculer aux François les principes de la constitution Angloise,'* he would have applied his talents and industry in support of the constitution 1789; but he imagined that the flight of the king and the disposition of the people rendered the immediate establishment of a republic in France practicable. He therefore joined his efforts with those of others, to convince the nation that the best measure they could adopt would be the abolition of royalty; for that, in preserving it, they should risk a thousand dangers in case they would re-establish Lewis XVI.—And in one of his publications he reasoned in this manner.—'If Lewis XVI is replaced on the throne, the nation will fall into anarchy; for nobody will obey him, *car il a perdu la confiance de la nation.* If you place another on the throne, and confine him as a prisoner, this will be thought cruel; you will be considered as barbarians: if you allow him to be at liberty, he will fly the kingdom, will be followed by many, and the same scenes will commence in France that filled England with blood during the dispute between the white rose and the red—a war about two individuals, in which the people had no interest, waged in a cause the most absurd; for what can be more absurd than for one-half of a nation to slaughter the other, to decide whether one man or another should be placed in an office which no man should be allowed to occupy?' Brissot concludes his reasoning with these words.—'N'ayez plus de roi, et les mécontens ne peuvent s'attacher à aucun nom; et ils deviennent odieux à toute la terre, en voulant donner un tyran à une nation qui n'en veut pas.'

All the efforts of the republicans were fruitless. The people in general had no idea that so extensive a nation

* Reponse de Jacques-Pierre Brissot, &c. &c.

as France could be governed without a king. All their notions of government were engrafted on monarchy.

Robespierre himself was not a republican. At this very period, while he harangued in the assembly against the king's inviolability, and was eager for bringing him to trial, he spoke in the Jacobin society against a republic; and he was the personal enemy of the most distinguished republicans. Others who like him declared at once against the king, and a republic, were supposed to have been gained by the duke of Orleans' agents, with a view to his being declared regent during the minority of Lewis XVII; but no suspicion of this kind adhered to Robespierre. With little taste for pleasures or magnificence, he despised money: power was his object, and popularity the only means by which he expected to obtain it. No man's external appearance was ever less calculated for assisting his desire of popularity. The person of Robespierre was puny, his visage pale, his features disagreeable, and he had the menacing eye and rapid gait of a madman. During a considerable period of the constituent assembly, he had been little distinguished. It was not until after the death of Mirabeau, and about the period of which we are now treating, that he found himself a man of any considerable importance, and that his views of ambition began to extend. The restoration of Lewis XVI gave him no hopes of being placed in any situation of authority. He knew that the king disliked him, that the queen despised him, and that he was hated by the whole court. He therefore ardently wished the deposition of the king, and joined with the partizans of the duke of Orleans and the republicans in promoting that measure: but he did not wish to see the duke of Orleans regent; because he knew that those who had been long attached to that prince, some of them men of eminent talents, would be preferred to him, and that he could expect under *his* regency only a subordinate situation. Nor did he wish for the establishment of a republic, unless he could have had hopes of governing it; and he saw Con-

dorcet, Gensonet, Guadet, Vergniaud, Brissot, Kersaint, and others in his way, which determined him to oppose the republican system both by his speeches in the Jacobin club and in some pamphlets which he published. If the king had been deposed after his return from Varennes, it is supposed that Robespierre and others connected with him had expectations from the appointment of a regency in which the duke of Orleans would have had no share. But after the king was re-established, and had accepted the constitution; after the constituent assembly was dissolved, and the legislative assembly, of which Robespierre could not be a member, convened, he became more assiduous than ever in his attendance at the Jacobin club, and in using every possible means of increasing his popularity, as the sole foundation on which the power he so ardently desired could be built. With an arrogant mind which spurned the common people, nobody ever flattered and cajoled them so much; nobody ever adapted his language and behaviour so much to their passions and prejudices; nobody ever seemed so obsequious to their will, and so anxious for their welfare. He seldom ventured to give any new or untried impulse to the multitude. He watched until they had received it from circumstances, or from those who were less circumspect than himself; but when he clearly saw which way the torrent of their passions bore, he joined with ostentatious zeal, became the most violent of the violent, and took the direction of the storm from those who had raised it. After the 10th of August 1792, he, for the first time, became an avowed and furious republican. His influence in the Jacobin club was then unrivalled; and, by redoubling his assiduity and his artful management, it soon became equal even in the new common council of Paris to that of Danton, who was its creator, and the governing spirit by which the catastrophe of that day was accomplished.

Robespierre from that time became more daring and more atrocious. There is no doubt of his being the chief mover of the massacres in September: that he tried to

get Brissot and others of the Gironde party arrested and involved in them; for they were then the great objects of his jealousy, and had for some time the honour of sharing with the king and queen that abuse which daily flowed from the pen of Marat and other creatures of Robespierre. By his influence and their calumnies, not one of the Brissotine party was elected as member of the convention for the department of Paris; nor indeed any one man without his approbation.

There is reason to believe that Louvet's accusation was just, that Robespierre was so intoxicated with his popularity as to have entertained hopes of being appointed dictator; and that Marat and Panis, by his connivance, sounded Barbaroux of Marseilles and Rebecqui on the subject about the time when the convention first assembled. The popularity of Robespierre at that period, however, was pretty much confined to the department of Paris. The vast majority of the deputies came to the convention strongly prejudiced against him, and with a high opinion of the integrity of Roland, and of the talents and patriotism of that Gironde party: for two or three months after the first meeting of the convention, any person who attended that assembly would have been persuaded that Robespierre and his most active adherents were so much the object of its detestation, that he had no chance of ever having influence in it. By his influence with the Jacobins, the municipality, and the mob, and with the assistance of a minority of the deputies, he forced on the king's trial, and then had the address to make the unwillingness which the Gironde party shewed to that measure, and even their popular proposal of an appeal to the people, matter of accusation against them, and the cause of their ruin. Having now devolved the command of the national guards of Paris on a creature of his own, he imperceptibly obtained an irresistible sway in the committee of public safety. Being supported by the municipality and the Jacobin clubs; never once yielding to pecuniary corruption, or shocking the eyes of the populace with personal magnifi-

cence; turning the talents and crimes of others to the purposes of his own ambition; cutting off his most confidential friends without remorse, when he became in the least jealous of them; having, by wonderful address, found means to have creatures of his own appointed commissioners to most of the departments; and the mob of Paris being always under the management of his agents, he at last obtained his object; the convention was the passive organ of his will, and Robespierre was the dictator of the French republic. But, after having drenched every department of France with blood, he became giddy by the exercise of power, forgot his original caution, and, by filling his very associates with terror, obliged them to be his executioners, that they might not become his victims.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A curious Account of Petion by Robespierre—M. Barnave—Tumultuous assembling in the Champ de Mars—Two Persons massacred by the Mob—M. La Fayette, at the head of the National Guards, attacks and disperses the Mob—Danton—Camille Desmoulins—Marat—Charlotte Cordé—Reflections—Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly.

To give at once an idea of the character and conduct of Robespierre, it was necessary to allude to events that happened long after the period of which we were treating, and to which it is now necessary to revert.

When it was evident that a republican form of government was unpopular, that the periodical paper called Républicain, and all the efforts of the few republicans then at Paris, made little impression, Brissot published a new proposal, which was adopted by some members of the national assembly, and obtained the approbation of many more of the Jacobin club; namely, that since it seemed to be determined to re-establish royalty, the king ought to have a council, not of his own choosing, nor of the national assembly's appointment, but to be elected by the

electors of the deputies, and to be renewed annually according to a plan which he published. Brissot concludes his proposal with this expression.—'En un mot, point de roi, ou un roi avec un conseil électif et amovible. Telle est un deux mots ma profession de foi.'*

The great error of the constituent assembly, and which they were led into by the dread of a return of the ancient system, was that of leaving monarchy too weak to resist the force that was likely to assail it; but this plan of Brissot tended to render it ridiculous as well as weak, and exposed it to be overset by the first attack, which in all probability was his intention. This plan however was no better received than his avowed project for immediately establishing a republic.

In the meantime M. Muguet de Nanthou made a report relative to the king's escape, in the name of the committees appointed by the assembly. In this report they give an opinion in favour of the king's inviolability; and that of course he ought not to undergo a trial. Immediately after hearing this report, the national assembly began a debate, which was resumed every day for three days on that subject. It would seem not to require above three minutes deliberation; for these obvious reasons, that the constitution rendered the person of the monarch inviolable; and determined besides, that in case the king should ever withdraw from the kingdom and actually reside in an enemy's territories, he should be formally summoned to return; and that only in the event of his refusing to comply with the summons, he was to be declared to have abdicated the crown. To have brought the king to trial, therefore, on the present occasion, would have betrayed a disregard of all principle; and shewn that the constitution, which they had bestowed such pains in rearing, was built upon a bank of sand, to be washed away by the first torrent that should issue from the kennels of the suburbs of St. Antoine.

* In a word, no king at all; or a king with an elective and removable council; such is my profession of faith.

Robespierre and Petion were the most violent against the king during this debate. Those two men started together in a race of popularity, which it might have been expected would have produced a little jostling between them. Hitherto however nothing of that nature had occurred; Robespierre thought too meanly of the talents of Petion to be jealous of him; he even beheld him at one period get somewhat before him on the course without uneasiness. It was not in Robespierre's nature to have a friendship for any body; but he despised Petion too much to hate him, until Brissot, who had been long the object of Robespierre's jealousy and hatred, drew him over to the Gironde party. He then honoured his old companion with a little of the rancour which he felt for all that faction.

This appeared first in the month of October 1792, when Petion endeavoured in a laborious pamphlet to refute several accusations of Robespierre against him; and one in particular, which seems to have hurt him exceedingly, namely, that he was entirely led by Brissot. To this Robespierre wrote an answer; and as he there appears in a new point of view, and displays a considerable share of humour, of which it was not natural to suppose such a man possessed, a few specimens may be excusable.

In Petion's pamphlet he represents Brissot as a man only in knowledge, but a child in simplicity.—'Que Brissot est l'homme le moins propre à être chef de parti.'* To this Robespierre answers—'On ne consulte point le disciple sur la capacité de son maître. Orgon est-il compétent pour juger Tartuffe?'† Petion, solicitous to remove an imputation which cruelly corroded his vanity, frequently repeats—'Jamais homme en place ne pensa et n'agit par lui-même autant que moi.'

'Mon cher Petion,' says Robespierre, 'vous vous ca-

* Brissot is the man on earth the least fit for being the leader of a party.

† The scholar is not consulted respecting the capacity of his master. Was Organ a competent judge of the character of Tartuffe?

lomniez vous-même quand vous prétendez que vous n'êtes mené par personne ; peut-être même vous l'êtes-vous persuadé de bonne foi : mais il n'en est rien, je vous jure. Le sait-on quand on est mené ? Voyez encore ce qui se passe sur nos théâtres. Lorsqu'une adroite soubrette, ou un valet intriguant, conduit un Geronte, ou un Orgon, comme par la lisière ; ne voyez-vous pas avec quel art les frippons s'extasient sur la rare sagesse et sur l'incroyable fermeté du bon homme, et comme celui-ci s'écrie, dans les éclats de la joie bruyante, Oh ! je sais bien qu'on ne me mene pas, moi ; et s'il y a une forte tête en France, je vous garantis que c'est celle-ci.' *

Robespiere then assures his old friend that there is a wonderful resemblance between this portrait of Geronte and Petion himself ; to prove which he asserts, that, after Brissot and some others had arranged the administration, of which Roland and Claviere were the chiefs, he had directly gone to Petion, and, on the pretence of consulting him on the subject, had said, well, whom do you think we should name for ministers ? How would you like Roland and Claviere ?—would not they be exactly to your mind ? continued Brissot. ' Parbleu ! oui !' answered Petion ; ' Oh, Roland, Claviere ! savez-vous que ce seroit délicieux ! qu'on les nomme.' † Brissot then assured him that he would endeavour to bring it about exactly as Petion had appointed.

Soon after which, continues Robespierre, ' je vous ai vu dans la ferme croyance que c'étoit vous qui les aviez

* My dear Petion, you calumniate yourself when you pretend that you are led by nobody. Perhaps you even believe it ; but you are quite mistaken, I will take my oath. But do people know when they are led ? Only observe what passes on our theatres. When a sly chambermaid or a knavish valet leads a Geronte or an Orgon as if it were in leading-strings, don't you see with what art the two former extol the wonderful wisdom and incredible firmness of the poor man ? while he, in the midst of their noisy joy, cries—I am pretty certain that I am not a man to be led ; and if there is a steady head in France, it is this on my shoulders.

† Roland and Claviere ! that would be charming—let them be appointed by all means.

choisis. Comme je vous demandois si cette demarche de la cour ne vous étoit pas suspecte, vous me repondites, avec un air de contentement très remarquable : ' Oh ! si vous saviez qui les a designés !' Je vous devinai, et je vous dis, en riant de votre bonne foi—' C'est vous, peut-être ?' Et alors en vous frottant les mains,—' Hem, hem !' ' me repondites-vous.' *

In this same letter Robespierre asserts that Petion, by the feebleness of his conduct, had prevented the insurrection of the 20th of June 1792 from being as decisive as that of the 10th of August ; and that the court, and particularly the king, had totally mistaken his character. ' Le gros Louis XVI,' says he in his abusive language, ' crut voir un rival dans un maire de Paris Jacobin ; mais César auroit dit, en contemplant votre visage épanoui par un rire éternel, ' Ce ne sera pas celui-là qui m'arrachera l'empire." †

As an apology for the freedom he takes with his old friend, Robespierre observes,—' Si, dans ce genre d'escrime tout-à-fait philanthropique, vous étiez exposé à quelque legère blessure, elle n'atteindroit que votre amour propre : et vous m'avez rassuré d'avance la-dessus, en protestant vous-même qu'il étoit nul.' ‡

Through the whole of this letter there runs a vein of pleasantry which might have been thought inconsistent with the saturnine temper and atrocious mind of Robe-

* I saw that you were in the firm conviction that it was you who had chosen them. When I asked you if that measure of the court did not strike you as a little suspicious, you answered with an air of extraordinary satisfaction,—' Ah ! if you but knew who it was that pointed them out !' ——Perceiving what you meant, and laughing at your credulity, I then said, ' It was you, perhaps ?'—on which, rubbing your hands together, you nodded assent.

† The plump Lewis thought he saw a rival in a Jacobin mayor of Paris ; but Cæsar would have said, on contemplating your face, spread with an eternal smile, ' It will not be this man who will tear the empire from me.'

‡ If in this dispute, which is entirely philanthropic, you should be exposed to some slight blows, they will be aimed at your vanity ; and you have put me quite at ease, my dear Petion, on that head, by declaring yourself that you have none.

spiere. After all the ridicule, however, which he endeavours to throw on Petion, those who knew him equally well, and are less prejudiced, represent him as a man of considerable learning, though not so much as he wished the world to believe; of some eloquence, but by no means so much as he believed himself; of some judgment, though a much smaller portion than he imagined; whereas he really possessed a very comfortable share of vanity, of which it appears he was persuaded that he had none at all.

This character may be thought perhaps singular; yet it is wonderful what a number of people resemble Petion. As for Robespierre, it is to be hoped that there is not such another man in the world.

Independent of the influence which Robespierre had over Petion at the period of which we were treating, another circumstance is supposed to have contributed to the violent part he took against the king during the three days which this debate lasted. It was mentioned above that M. Barnave was a joint commissioner with Petion from the assembly to meet the royal family on their return from Varennes; and it was remarked that the king gave such a marked preference to the former as greatly offended the latter.

M. Barnave was a young man of very promising talents; the applause bestowed on his speeches in the national assembly and the Jacobin society, with the impetuosity of his temper, rendered him self-sufficient. Eloquence being that in which he chiefly excelled, he considered it as the principal talent of a statesman; and was apt to undervalue men of more mature and juster ideas than his own, because they could not express them so well. He had distinguished himself by his violence against the ministers and the court on various occasions in the assembly, and would in all likelihood have entirely joined the republican party, had not his zeal been restrained by Mirabeau, whom he greatly admired, and who a little before his last illness had become convinced that the democratic spirit threatened the destruction of even that limited monarchy

which he preferred to any other form of government, and which he was determined to maintain.

The queen was not unacquainted with these intentions of Mirabeau, nor with the influence he had possessed over the mind of Barnave. The affecting point of view in which he saw the royal family, the flattering attention and powerful address of the queen, joined to the impression which Mirabeau had already made, entirely converted Barnave. He sided with Liancour, Malouet, Alexander Lameth, Adrien Duport, and those who spoke for the re-establishing of the king; and repelled the arguments of Robespierre, Petion, Buzot, and others, with energy and success. It was finally decreed that the king should not be farther questioned respecting what was passed, and that the constitution should be accomplished as was at first intended.

This decision of the assembly was too wise and liberal to be approved of by the multitude. It occasioned such a general clamour as revived the hopes of the republicans, who thought that by improving the present discontents the revolution might after all finish in the accomplishment of their favourite system of government. In their efforts to instigate the people to tumult they were assisted by the agents of the duke of Orleans; though these last certainly gave their assistance in the hope of a different termination.

The squares and public gardens were filled with groups of people, to whom certain well-known orators, called motion-makers, harangued against the conduct of the national assembly. Robespierre coming out of the hall found the street filled with those groups; who spreading around the patriot as soon as they observed him,—'*Alas! my friends*,' he was heard to say, '*all is ruined; the king is to be restored.*' This was repeated all over Paris, as an unanswerable proof that the assembly were traitors, and the country undone. The theatres were shut as in the times of public calamity. The multitude afterwards resorted to the Champ de Mars, with a declaration or petition, of

which many copies were made, and the people invited to sign it on the altar of confederation, which still stood in that field. This declaration announced 'that the subscribers thought, that in questions comprehending the general safety of the people it was their duty to express their wishes to the national representatives. That, in their opinion, the king by his late desertion had palsied the government and broken his oath. That this desertion and perjury, besides other criminal acts which preceded, accompanied, and followed them, implied an abdication of the crown. That it was unbecoming of the majesty of the French nation to intrust its government in the hands of a perjured person, a traitor, and a fugitive.' It concludes with a formal demand 'that the national assembly will sanction by their decree the abdication of the government executed by Lewis XVI on the 21st of June;' and a declaration 'that the subscribers will never acknowledge him for their king, unless the majority of the nation should express a wish different from theirs.'

It appeared that the leaders of two different factions were engaged in the fabrication of this address to the assembly; for in some copies, after the declaration never to acknowledge Lewis XVI for their king, the words *nor any other* were inserted. This was probably done by some of the republicans; but, as it was not agreeable to the opinion of the great majority even of those who wished the dethronement of the present king, the words were erased. When the national assembly heard of those proceedings, they ordered the municipal officers of Paris to their bar, and directed them to take measures for dispersing these tumultuous assemblies, and punishing their promoters.

The first measure which the municipality adopted was to issue a proclamation, importing, that, as it was discovered that strangers paid by the enemies of France to sow sedition and promote insurrection had drawn numbers to assemble under the pretence of signing a petition, but with the real intention of overawing the legislature and ruining the nation, orders had been given to the commander of the

national guards to disperse all groups in the streets, or assemblings in the fields, and to seize the disobedient and carry them to prison.

There unquestionably were no strangers at this time in Paris paid by foreign powers for the purpose assigned in the proclamation; but such accusations are often proclaimed by those who know their falsehood, on purpose to render the measures against which the proclamation is issued the more unpopular.

The proclamation had little effect. Vast numbers crowded to the Champ de Mars to sign the declaration. The fury of the multitude augmented with their numbers. Women as well as men ascended the altar to subscribe their names; and though it could hardly be supposed that any of the former who attended on such an occasion were much worth looking at, yet two unfortunate men, one a soldier with a wooden leg, the other a hair-dresser, had the rash curiosity to place themselves under the boards which formed the floor of the altar, to contemplate those who ascended.

They were soon discovered, dragged forth by the mob, and carried before a judge of the section; who, thinking their conduct deserved *some* punishment, ordered them to be imprisoned; but as they were on the way, some of the rabble observed that they must have been hired by aristocrates to secret themselves under the altar, with no other design than that of blowing up all the patriots male and female it contained; and that if a narrow examination of the ground were made, barrels of gunpowder would undoubtedly be found near the place. This reasoning was so satisfactory, that all farther proof or investigation was thought unnecessary. The two prisoners were directly hung upon the nearest lantern, and their heads afterwards cut off, and stuck upon pikes according to custom. What seemed particular was, that they were directly carried to the Palais Royal, and marched in procession before the windows.

When the municipality heard of those murders, they gave orders that M. La Fayette should directly march at

the head of a sufficient number of the national guards to the Champ de Mars, and, being accompanied by some municipal officers, use every legal and effectual means to seize the murderers and disperse the insurgents. Martial law at the same time was formally proclaimed; and a red flag was displayed from the window of the town-house. When these troops arrived at the Champ de Mars, they found it crowded by a furious multitude, who, instead of dispersing, insulted the troops with repeated exclamations,—'A bas le drapeau rouge, à bas les bayonnettes,' and even by throwing stones. M. Bailly the mayor desired the troops to halt; and, after the formalities which the law required, M. La Fayette ordered part of them to fire over the heads of the mob. When they perceived that none were wounded, it confirmed them in an opinion which their instigators had inspired them with, that neither the general nor the mayor had any inclination to hurt them, and that they durst not fire with ball. From this idea they became more outrageous: the soldiers and some of the officers of the national guard were wounded. The troops fired upon their aggressors, of whom between 60 and 70 were killed or wounded. The multitude then fled into the city, exclaiming against the general and mayor for having ordered innocent persons to be massacred; and they endeavoured to instigate the citizens against the national guards and those who commanded them. The citizens, however, lent a deaf ear to those clamours, shutting their shops against the multitude as they passed to the suburbs of St. Antoine and St. Marceaux, where most of them resided. The open and avowed exciters of this insurrection immediately disappeared. Danton, hearing that an order was issued for arresting him, fled to Marseilles. Camille Desmoulins followed his example. This person had uncommon claims for popularity. On the memorable day on which the prince of Lambesc attacked the people at the Pont Tournant, Camille Desmoulins mounted on a table in the Palais Royal, and encouraged them to take arms. Since that time he had supported the popular

cause by his speeches in the clubs, and by his writings not entirely devoid of wit, and generally full of that kind of coarse pleasantry which is relished by the common people. Danton and he were at this time attached to Robespierre, who pretended much friendship for both. They had the guilt of concurring with him in the massacre of the deputies of the Gironde; but afterwards, when that perfidious man became jealous of Danton, and found Camille less pliable to his will than he wished, he contrived to have both publicly executed.

Others of less eminence lurked in Paris. Marat betook himself to a subterranean habitation which had been prepared for him by Le Gendre the butcher, which had served to secrete him from justice on various occasions both before and since the period we are now treating of. It is much to be regretted that he was not dug out and executed on this occasion. It would have prevented a great deal of mischief of which he was afterwards the cause; and he would have died with more propriety by the hand of the hangman, that by that of the extraordinary and most interesting woman who gave him the mortal blow.*

* Marie Charlotte Cordé was a beautiful young woman of an unblemished character, distinguished for dignity of sentiment and benevolence of heart; but who had never given cause of suspicion of a disturbed understanding, nor, until she stuck a poinard into the heart of Marat, any indication of a violent temper.

She was not prompted to this rash action by any personal indignity offered to herself, by rage, by love, by jealousy, by religious enthusiasm, or any of those incitements which alone have been thought capable of urging women to such deeds. She saw her country in calamitous circumstances; she dreaded their increase from the wickedness of one man whom the law could not reach; she was convinced that by killing him she would be of more service to her country than by all the exertions of a long life. 'I killed one man,' she declared at her trial, 'to save a hundred thousand.' She formed her design coolly, without intrusting any mortal with her intention: she undertook a long journey to accomplish it: she weighed all its consequences: she calculated on death, and in a more dreadful shape than that in which she afterwards met with it; she expected to be torn in pieces by the mob, or that her body would be dragged through the streets. The idea of those horrors did not shake the steadiness

Laclos and Brissot had also promoted this insurrection, but not so openly as those above mentioned, and certain-

steadiness of her mind. She looked for no recompense but in the reflection of having prevented the death of thousands, and the misery of tens of thousands. She was allowed an advocate to assist her at her trial. M. Chauveau, when the evidence was finished, pronounced the following brief speech to the jury.—' L'accusée avoue avec sangfroid l'attentat qu'elle a commis ; elle en avoue la longue préméditation ; elle en avoue les circonstances ; en un mot, elle avoue tout, et ne cherche pas même à se justifier. Voilà, citoyens jurés, sa défense toute entiere. Ce calme imperturbable, et cette entiere abnégation de soi-même, qui n'annoncent aucuns remords, et pour ainsi dire en présence de la mort même ; ce calme, et cette abnégation sublime sous un rapport, ne sont pas dans la nature ; ils ne peuvent s'expliquer que par l'exaltation du fanatisme politique qui lui a mis le poignard à la main, et c'est à vous, citoyens jurés, à juger de quel poids doit être cette considération morale dans la balance de la justice.' *

The jury unanimously found her guilty. Sentence of death was pronounced. She then addressed M. Chauveau to this effect.—' Sir, you have spoken in my defence in delicate and generous terms : it was the only style proper for me. I thank you. It has inspired me with esteem for you, of which I will give you a proof. The judges have informed me that my goods are confiscated. I am indebted for some things at the prison. I charge you to acquit that debt.'

A little before her execution, a confessor was introduced to her, and offered his services. She thanked him, and expressed a sense of obligation to those who had sent him ; but said she had no need of his services.

When the officers entered her chamber to conduct her to death, she mildly begged to be excused for a few minutes until she had finished the letter she was then writing to her father.

The populace, in spite of their prejudice in favour of Marat were so struck with her undaunted deportment, that they did not, according to their custom, insult her as she was carried to execution. She occasionally

* The prisoner acknowledges the act of which she is accused ; she acknowledges that she had long premeditated it ; she acknowledges the various circumstances ; in short, she acknowledges the whole accusation, and takes no pains to justify herself. In this, gentlemen of the jury, lies her entire defence. This astonishing calmness, this total abnegation of self, which betrays no remorse even in the very presence of death ; this calm and this abnegation seem not to be in nature ; they cannot be accounted for, but on the supposition that political fanaticism put the poniard into her hand ; and it belongs to you, gentlemen of the jury, to determine what weight that consideration should have in the scale of justice.

ly with views very different from each other. Laclos and others attached to the duke of Orleans wished the deposition of the king, that their patron might be declared regent, and that they themselves might of course obtain situations of power and emolument during the young king's minority. Brissot, who abhorred the duke of Orleans, promoted this seditious petition, in the hopes that the establishment of a republic would be the immediate effect of the king's being deposed.

This assembly in the Champ de Mars, under the pretence of signing a petition for the purpose of deposing the king at the very time that the national assembly had his conduct under consideration, and even after it was known that they had decreed his restoration, with the outrageous behaviour of the multitude, obviously to overawe the legislature, and carry their point by force, was certainly rebellion, however palliated by Brissot himself, in a work he published sometime afterwards, in which this event is singularly misrepresented.* The conduct of Brissot was strongly disapproved of by all those first movers of the revolution, whose view from the beginning, and whose ultimate wish, was a monarchical form of government limited by law, and consistent with the liberty of the subject; and had Brissot been tried at this time † for the part he

ally smiled as she passed; and by that alone shewed that she paid them any attention. On the scaffold her face displayed the bloom of health, and the serenity of a mind undisturbed.

Assassination can in no case be entirely justified; but this seems the least culpable and most disinterested instance that can be imagined; and the whole behaviour of Marie Charlotte Cordé exhibits a benevolence of intention and heroic firmness of mind that perhaps has never been surpassed by woman or by man.

* On profite d'un rassemblement *paisible* de citoyens que signoient une pétition au Champ de Mars; on les peint comme un amas de brigands aux yeux de la garde nationale; on *prépare* la tragédie de deux hommes trouvés le matin sous l'autel et massacrés à propos. Le drapeau rouge est déployé sans nécessité; et le sang coule, sans que la loi ait parlé.—— Reponse de Brissot à tous les Libellistes, &c.

† That Brissot thought himself at this time in some danger, and that he was shunned by many, appears by his own account.—' J'ai été un de ces

certainly took in this insurrection, the object of which was to overset the constitution, he might have been justly condemned: and a subsequent tribunal would have been saved the guilt of condemning him and his associates for crimes they never committed, and for that part of their conduct that was meritorious.

The formidable appearance which this insurrection at one moment had, made a strong impression on the minds of many members of the assembly, and of the most respectable citizens of Paris. They considered the insurgents as a gang of needy ruffians, who waited but for a pretext or a signal from their employers to burst into the shops and houses, and pillage them. The energy, therefore, which the assembly, municipality, and commander of the national guards, had shewn in suppressing this commotion was generally approved of; and a greater degree of order and tranquillity than had been known for some time before in Paris was the consequence.

It would have been fortunate that the constituent assembly had continued for at least one year longer; not only because it consisted of a body of more respectable men than the succeeding assembly, but also because by experience it had acquired a juster notion of things than when it was first constituted. The exalted theories concerning liberty, which had been entertained by some of its most distinguished members, were now considerably moderated by the scenes to which they had been witnesses. Whatever dislike the king may be supposed to have had to some parts of the constitution; yet after accepting it and swearing to maintain it, and after the dangers he had been exposed to, there is great reason to think that his resolution was to adhere to his engagements, and

ces hommes désignés publiquement pour l'échaffaud; moi que, huit jours auparavant, on portoit presque aux nues, je me trouvai tout-à-coup dans un abime effroyable, je lisois sur tous les visages, et les calomnies qu'on avoit repandues contre moi, et l'effroi que mon approche inspiroit, et ma sentence prochaine. Mille avis me parvenoient à la fois; mes amis trembloient pour moi; les uns me conseilloient de fuir; les autres de modérer mes traits contre mes persécuteurs,' &c.

that he would to the most minute particular have done so, if he had had an assembly to deal with who had formed a similar resolution. And those nearest the king's person, however different their original opinion may have been, must have confirmed him in this resolution, provided they wished well to the royal family: but all the dawnings of concord and tranquillity that seemed ready to open at this period on the French nation disappeared with the constituent assembly.

The committee which had been employed for a considerable time in digesting and arranging the constitutional decrees had now concluded its labour. The whole was read to the assembly on the 4th of August 1791. It was then debated article by article, and on the 3d of September presented to the king, who was at the same time restricted by the assembly to accept or reject the whole without exception or observation. On the 13th of the same month, being attended by a deputation of sixty members, the king went to the assembly, and sanctioned the assent which he had the day before sent in writing, by an oath to be faithful to the nation, and to employ the powers vested in him for the maintenance of the constitution; and on the 30th of September the assembly was terminated by its own spontaneous dissolution.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Legislative Assembly—The King determined to adhere scrupulously to the Constitution—The Gironde determined on a Republic—The King's Household Guards—Formation of the King's and the Queen's Household—A new Hardship put on the Clergy—The Veto exercised—Confusion this produces in the Assembly—Unforeseen Events in the Revolution—Disagreement among the King's Ministers—M. de Narbonne—M. de Bertrand—Administration dissolved.

UNFORTUNATELY for France the legislative assembly contained less wisdom than its predecessor. It was composed of men not only less respectable from their rank in

society, but in general of inferior abilities. There were in it however a few men of distinguished talents, a greater number of a considerable share of learning; but the ideas of both those classes on the subject of government had not been matured by long reflection nor corrected by experience. The remainder, forming by far the greatest proportion, consisted of men with no pretension to knowledge, some of them of impetuous characters and enthusiastic imaginations, who had been elected merely on account of their zeal and activity in the revolution.

From this account of the second or legislative assembly, nothing very wise or politic was to be expected in their conduct; but it could hardly have been conceived that they would have begun by so childish a measure as they really did, namely, contesting the prerogatives and honours which the preceding assembly had left with the king. Having met on the 1st of October, they verified their powers, chose their president and secretaries, took the oath to maintain the constitution decreed by the constituent assembly in the years 1789, 1790, and 1791, and never to propose or consent to any law contrary to it; and immediately after they decreed, contrary to what had been the usage during the former assembly, that when the king should repair to the present one for the ceremony of what they call *l'ouverture de la séance*, their president should have the *first* and the king the *second* place. This ridiculous conduct of the assembly was considered as highly insolent by the king's council, which was unanimously for resisting it; but the king himself found a method of eluding at once the contest and the humiliation, by observing, that as the constitution did not ordain that he should go in person to the assembly, either for the *ouverture* or any other purpose, he would on the present occasion allow the *ouverture* to take place without his appearing.

This new pretension of the assembly was viewed with indignation by the public in general, as well as by the king's council; which when the assembly understood, and

were informed of the resolution the king had taken, they annulled their foolish decree, and his majesty then consented to open the session in person, which he did by a very judicious speech.

Sometime previous to the opening of this assembly, M. de Thevenard, ministre de la marine, having resigned that office, the king expressed a desire that M. Bertrand de Moleville should be his successor, and desired M. de Montmorin, ministre de l'intérieur, to communicate his desire to that gentleman. In a letter written by him to the president of the national convention in November 1792, M. Bertrand declares that he had great unwillingness to accept of the office, because at that time he harboured doubts respecting the king's disposition towards the constitution, which determined him to decline the offer made to him in the king's name by M. de Montmorin. But upon receiving a pressing letter, written by the king himself, he requested to have a moment's conference with his majesty; which being agreed to, he was presented to the king the following day by M. de Lessart. M. Bertrand then expressed his sense of the honour that was intended for him; but that he might be enabled to serve his majesty with efficacy, he begged to be informed of his majesty's real disposition respecting the constitution, and what was the conduct he expected his ministers were to observe on that subject. To which the king answered,— 'I have been informed of your scruples. I do not blame you for them; it is reasonable you should know what is expected from you. I acknowledge that I do not approve of every article of the constitution. I am convinced that if the assembly had not precluded all observations, by confining me to a simple acceptance or refusal, I could have indicated certain alterations which they would have approved. But that is over; I have accepted and sworn to maintain it such as it is, and I am resolved to be strictly faithful to my engagement, expecting that my ministers will conform their conduct in all respects to the same plan. I am the more determined strictly and literally to

adhere to every article of the constitution, because it is the best means of shewing to the nation its excellencies or defects, and what alterations they may find it necessary to make.' M. Bertrand having expressed his satisfaction at hearing sentiments so conformable to his own, added, —' May I presume to ask whether those are the sentiments of the queen?' His majesty assured him they were; which was confirmed to him by the queen herself the same day, when M. Bertrand was presented to her.

These circumstances are mentioned from good authority, in support of what has been above asserted with regard to the disposition of the king and queen at the opening of the legislative assembly; and if that assembly had sincerely concurred in the same sentiments, order and prosperity might from this date have been restored to France under the influence of a limited monarchy. But the Rochefoucaults, the Mouniers, and the Lally Tolendals had forsaken the assembly. Mirabeau was dead. The Lameths, Adrien Duport, La Fayette, Barnave, and other sincere supporters of the constitution, could not be members of the second assembly by that most impolitic decree which excluded all who had been of the first. The same decree excluded Robespierre; but his malevolent spirit haunted the club of Jacobins, and was there as active and mischievous as ever. The promoters of the late insurrection, instead of being pursued with vigour and brought to trial, were allowed to appear again in the capital, and some of them were chosen members of the assembly; particularly Brissot, who in a short time became the centre of that circle, so well known under the name of the Gironde—many of them men of talents unquestionably, but all of them in their hearts republicans, and therefore very dangerous members of a legislative assembly belonging to a monarchical constitution.

It is impossible to reflect upon the conduct of this party of the Gironde without being persuaded that their object from the beginning was to wean the minds of their

countrymen from monarchy, even in the mildest form. They imagined that the constitution itself contained that within it which rendered freedom insecure, and would sooner or later be the means of bringing back that despotic government which they justly abhorred as the greatest of all earthly curses, and which in the meantime retarded the establishment of that republican government, which in visionary beauty appeared to their imaginations as the greatest of all political blessings. They thought that to have lopped the extravagant branches of monarchy was not sufficient; that the trunk itself must be entirely eradicated, before the tree of liberty could take firm root in France. They dreaded *that* taste for pomp and for the splendour of royalty which they believed still to exist in the hearts of their countrymen. If the king himself should not be disposed to extend the power of the crown beyond the limits of the constitution, they thought him under the influence of those who would make him attempt it; and that if the attempt should fail in his reign, it might succeed in that of his successor. But at this period so far were some of those who had the greatest sway among the Brissotine party from fearing the perfidious attempts of the king against the constitution, that they were now persuaded that past experience, his natural love of justice, his unambitious disposition, had determined him to adhere strictly to it, and to lend a deaf ear in future to whatever might be suggested to induce him to a contrary conduct; what they most dreaded was that the king's natural love of justice, his affability, and all the mild virtues of his character, would revive the seeds of loyalty which lay concealed in the hearts of the people, and occasion the restoration of a government more arbitrary than that which had been overturned. To blast those seeds entirely, and prevent so pernicious an harvest, they used means which never can be justifiable in a creature so fallible in judgment, so circumscribed in his views, and so limited in his faculties, as man. Rumours of new plots and conspiracies, of an Austrian com-

mittee within the palace, and other tales equally false, were propagated by active emissaries, in the places of public resort, and insinuated in the journals supposed to be under the direction of leading men of the party. The king's character was grossly misrepresented, and new sources of calumny were opened against the queen. To that species of slander to which female beauty is most exposed, others were added of a more important nature, in which the independence and freedom of the nation were deeply concerned.

The causes of inquietude with which this unhappy monarch was surrounded, did not proceed from the republican party in the assembly alone. The formation of that body of guards which the constitution had appointed to the king, greatly excited the jealousy of the national guards of Paris; although the king used every precaution he could think of to prevent it. He consented that the Parisian national guards should continue to perform duty at the palace, and to mount guard at particular posts of the Tuilleries in common with his own peculiar body guards; he expressed to both corps, that the most agreeable mark of attachment they could give him would be to live in union and friendly terms with each other. All this could not cure the national guards of their jealousy: the king could not speak a word, in passing, to an officer of the body guards, or look on the soldiers with an air of satisfaction, without the others complaining loudly that the new guards were preferred to them; and hardly a week passed without complaints of this nature, and without the royal family being teased with their suspicions or animosities. These disputes, with some other incidents, were afterwards made a pretext by the king's enemies to disband the constitutional guards entirely, that he might be unable to resist insurrections, and be entirely at their mercy.*

* When the troops were first decreed for the king's household, it was a distinction much desired to belong to them. The formation of them was left to his majesty; and he resolved to take one-third of both officers

The emigration at this period was very great; and had extended to both sexes, comprehending several ladies of the queen's household. It was imagined that, to render himself as well as the queen popular, his majesty was inclined to have the vacant places filled by the relations of those who were believed to be the warmest friends to the revolution. On this presumption the ministers were earnestly solicited by the numerous candidates to be included in the new formation of both households. The king, however, being aware that he was in danger of making more enemies than friends, postponed the business from time to time: and, when importuned by the ministers themselves, he eluded coming to an immediate nomination, by desiring each minister to give a list of those whom he recommended to the different offices which were to be created. The words the monarch used, speaking on this subject to a person who enjoyed his confidence, give a more just and a more affecting idea than perhaps any other could do, of the perplexing state in which the royal family were even as this period, when they were generally believed more free than usual from constraint.—'Je sens bien que la reine ne peut pas garder sans inconvénient auprès d'elle des femmes d'emigrés, et je lui en ai déjà parlé; mais on ne peut pas exiger non plus qu'elle

and men from the troops of the line, and the other two from the national guards, which was done accordingly. But with a view to render himself extensively popular, he desired each department of France to send a certain number of their national guards, to compose that part of his household troops which was to be formed from the national troops. But although in general they were well chosen, yet some of those sent by the departments were exceedingly seditious; whereas, if he had taken them all from the national guards of Paris, the character of each individual might have been known before he was appointed. A great number of the citizens of Paris would have had sons or relations in the king's household, which would have rendered him popular where popularity was of infinitely more importance than in the remote departments; and a guard so connected could not have been dangerous to liberty. Had this plan been observed, so many Parisian families would have been interested in the household troops being kept up, as would have rendered the assembly cautious of decreeing their reduction.

fasse sa société de Mesdames Petion, Condorcet, ou autres de cette espece. Quant à moi, la plûpart de ceux dont le service m'étoit le plus agréable dans mon ancienne maison m'ont abandonné, et parmi ceux qui en sont restés il y en a qui font le tourment de ma vie. Il y a par exemple ce ————, qui est sans cesse chez moi pour espionner et commenter tout ce qui s'y dit, tout ce qui s'y fait, et qui en fait ensuite les rapports les plus faux.' *

The assembly, not satisfied with the hard decree which stripped those clergy of their livings who refused to take the oath to the constitution, passed another still more severe by which a new oath was to be offered to them; and all who did not take it were to leave the kingdom.

All the bishops then at Paris, greatly alarmed at this fresh act of oppression, met on purpose to draw up a memorial to be presented to the king, entreating him to interpose his negative. His majesty, who had felt remorse for having consented to the first decree against the clergy, received this memorial very graciously, and declared that he was determined to refuse his sanction to the decree, which he considered as cruel and unjust.

When this matter was laid before the king's council, which consisted of M. Delessart for foreign affairs, M. de Narbonne as minister of war, M. de Bertrand of the marine, M. Cahier de Gerville of the interior, M. Duport du Tertre, keeper of the seals, and M. Tarbé, minister of contributions, they were unanimously of opinion that the decree should be negatived; but, this being the first in-

* I am sensible that the queen cannot without inconvenience keep the wives of emigrants about her, and I have already spoken to her on that subject; but neither can it be expected that she will compose her society of Mesdames Petion, Condorcet, or others of that class. As for my own part, the greatest number of my ancient household whose service was the most agreeable to me, have abandoned me, and among those who remain there are some who are the torment of my life. There is for example that ————, who is continually at hand to spy and comment upon all that is said and all that is done, and afterwards gives the most false account of the whole.

stance of the king's exercising this prerogative, it was thought expedient that it should be done with solemnity; and, to shew that it was with the entire approbation of the council, all the ministers agreed to accompany M. Duport du Tertre to the assembly when he went to announce the king's veto.

M. Duport having a message of a more agreeable nature to communicate to them at the same time, he encouraged his colleagues by assuring them, that he would take that opportunity of throwing in a few forcible arguments to prove the expediency of the veto, which he was convinced would satisfy the assembly. The king approved of this arrangement; and on the 10th of November all the ministers assembled at M. Duport's house, that they might go to the assembly together. Before they set out, he was observed to drink two glasses of cold water. One of his colleagues asked if he felt himself indisposed. He answered,—'Non; c'est une précaution que je prends toutes les fois que je vais à l'assemblée; le sang me bout dans les veines quand j'entends ces gens-là; et si je ne prennois pas quelque chose pour me calmer, je serois sûr de m'emporter, et de leur dire les vérités les plus dures.'*

The entrance of the six ministers into the hall of the assembly, and the report of a message from the king, the purport of which was unknown, excited curiosity, and produced a silence more profound and of longer duration than had ever been known in that assembly. M. Duport in the meantime laid upon the table, one after another, the different decrees which the king had sanctioned, among which were two that the assembly had shewn particular anxiety to have passed. Having fulfilled this part of his duty to the satisfaction of the assembly, he added, that with regard to the decree which imposed a new oath

* No; it is a precaution I take every time I go to the assembly to keep my blood calm; for it is apt to boil in my veins at sight of those fellows; and if I did not take something to cool me, I should be so overheated with passion as to tell them the most disagreeable truths.

on the unconstitutional priests, *le Roi examinera*; which is the expression used when a decree is negatived. The minister then drew from his pocket a paper containing the discourse which he had prepared relative to the king's message; but unfortunately the two glasses of water began to operate at that instant, and they produced an effect more violent than could have been expected from so simple a medicine. His face became pale; his voice grew weak; and his hand shook so much that it was with difficulty he could read the discourse; and, what was most unlucky of all, the first sentence he pronounced alluded to the refusal of the sanction. He was allowed to proceed no farther: a general uproar began in the assembly: all spoke at once demanding la parole; and all continuing to speak without having obtained permission. 'M. le Président,—M. le Président, nous ne pouvons pas entendre ce message,' exclaimed one. 'Ce sont les motifs du réfus de sanction,' rejoined another. 'Ce message est inconstitutionel,' cried a third. 'Rappellez à l'ordre le ministre,' added a fourth. 'M. le Président, je demande la parole pour une motion d'ordre,' said a fifth; and many others made the same requisition. The tumult continued seven or eight minutes, during which the ministers stood waiting the result. As soon as it abated, the president proposed the question, whether they should refuse to hear the message as unconstitutional. M. Bertrand, perceiving that the keeper of the seals made no effort to prevent this, desired to be heard for a single moment. This was refused; and it was decreed that the message should not be heard; after which the president informed M. Bertrand that he might speak. M. Bertrand said, that what he had to say could now be of little importance; but that if he had been allowed to speak before they passed the decree, he would have informed them that the king's message was to communicate certain measures which his majesty had taken to put a stop to emigration. He had no sooner pronounced these words than the tumult recommenced: one part of the assembly insisted upon retracting the decree and hear-

ing the message; another were for maintaining the decree; but as the keeper of the seals was silent, although, had it not been for the chilling effect of the water, he might have represented that, according to the constitution, the assembly had no right to refuse to hear a message from the king; the business ended here, and the order of the day was called for.

In the account of this transaction given in the newspaper called the Moniteur, the words used by M. Bertrand were mistated. He was represented, after the words *to stop the emigration*, to have added, *of navy officers*. He thought proper to address a letter to the editor of the Moniteur, desiring that the mistake might be corrected, as he had not mentioned the *officers of the navy*, nor could with propriety have done it, no one officer having deserted his post since his appointment to the place of minister of the marine. This letter formed the pretext for a denunciation against M. Bertrand a short time afterwards.

The legislative assembly manifested so great a disposition to put an unfavourable construction on the king's measures, that he was constantly on his guard, had the constitution always before his eyes, and seldom proposed any plan to his ministers or adopted one proposed by them, without previously examining whether or not it was strictly conformable to it; and if there were doubts on that head, he generally rejected the measure. This attention rendered it difficult for the king's enemies to find, what they eagerly looked for, any matter of accusation founded on his having infringed the constitution. An attempt was made to put that construction on his having made use of the veto. It was said to be applying a constitutional power diametrically against the spirit of the constitution. But who are to be the judges in this matter? If it be the assembly, then the veto is a word signifying nothing. If it is the king, then there was no infringement of the constitution. But no prudence on his part could have enabled him to avoid all the dangers with which he was surrounded; nor could human pene-

tration foresee what was to be the effect, when ambition, enthusiasm, prejudice, patriotism, ignorance, and caprice, acting upon a large body of men possessed with power, are the causes. Indeed, many events in the course of this revolution are so surprising, and so little to be looked for from what occurred immediately before, that they may be compared to the tricks of a juggler, who bewilders the senses of the spectators, and, every time he removes the cup or the hat, presents some object extremely different, if not precisely the reverse of what the expected to see.

For example—Who could have expected that the archbishop of Sens would be succeeded, as prime minister of France, by a foreigner who was a protestant by religion and a republican by birth? After being created minister upon account of his popularity, who could have imagined that M. Necker would be ordered to quit the kingdom when his popularity was at the highest? Could those who saw him flying like a felon to the frontiers conceive, that he would within a few days be recalled and brought back in triumph to his former situation? Or could those who saw the frantic joy of the people at his return imagine, that he would soon after be permitted to withdraw out of the kingdom without notice or regret? After all the time and labour which had been bestowed in forming a constitution of a monarchical form; after the whole nation had sworn to maintain it; after the legislative assembly, amidst the plaudits of the galleries, had declared against a republic in the month of July 1792, who could have believed that a republican form of government would be decreed in the month of September of the same year? Could it have been foreseen that the duke of Rochefoucault, M. Mounier, and many more who struggled to obtain freedom for France, would be murdered or driven out of their country as the agents of despotism? When the king was a prisoner and the nation in anarchy, who expected that the raw soldiery and undisciplined peasantry of France, under the direction of

a general who had never before commanded an army, should baffle the skill and energy of a numerous veteran army, commanded by a general of the highest military reputation in Europe? At a moment when they certainly could not wish for new enemies, who could have thought that the convention would have wantonly provoked every neighbouring state by ridiculous and hostile decrees? When unhappy and distracted France was suffering under the most cruel internal commotion, and on the point of exhausting her strength by civil war as much as her bitterest enemies could wish, who could have imagined that they would contrive a scheme, the effect of which was to assuage commotions, unite her councils, and inspire her with a vigour she never had shewn before? Could any body who had seen Robespierre odious to the great majority of the convention, and with difficulty allowed to speak, have imagined that this very man, who seemed to hate mankind and was formed for being hated by them, was ever to acquire power by popularity, and be able to exercise a degree of tyranny over those zealots of freedom, which it could hardly be expected the mutes of a seraglio would have long submitted to?

To return to the period we left. When the king and those around him seem to have shut their hearts from any other view, and to have centered all their hopes of comfort and security in conforming to the regulations of the constitution, it was peculiarly unlucky that there was not perfect concord in the king's council on other points of conduct. Though there is reason to believe that all the ministers wished well to their country, the most distinguished for talents and energy among them were of very different characters. M. de Narbonne, the minister of war, was a man of spirit and enterprise, of very pleasing manners, of a great share of wit, and various other accomplishments. M. Bertrand, the minister of the marine, was more advanced in life, of a clear and masculine judgment, of unremitting application, but of plainer manners than is usual with his countrymen. He had managed

the public affairs as intendant in the province of Britanny, during a difficult period, with great steadiness, and equally to the satisfaction of the king and the province.

As it had been remarked by M. Bertrand, that some of the ministers during the first assembly had been brought into trouble by communicating with the committees, owing to their words or actions having been misrepresented, he proposed to his colleagues, that they should communicate and correspond directly with the assembly, as ordained by the constitution, and never with the committees. This being approved of by the king, was agreed to by all the ministers, except M. de Narbonne, who at this time enjoyed a great share of popularity, was praised in the journals of Brissot and Condorcet, while M. Bertrand was abused in both. M. de Narbonne imagined that it was only by preserving his popularity that he could be of service as a minister either to his king or country. He therefore corresponded with the committees, went often there, was always well received, and appeared to be on a friendly footing with several leading deputies of the Gironde party. This conduct was highly displeasing to M. Bertrand and some of the other ministers, and, with other subjects of disagreement, was the cause of M. de Narbonne's quitting the office of minister. After his resignation, as the misunderstanding between him and M. Bertrand had been commented on in Brissot's journal, the latter thought it expedient to resign also. The consequence was the entire dissolution of this administration, —an event much to be regretted; because perhaps it was the only administration since the revolution, in which all the ministers were at once attached to the king and to the constitution. M. de Narbonne soon afterwards joined the army under M. La Fayette, whose conduct in support of the constitution he approved, and thereby drew upon himself the hatred first of the Jacobins, and finally of the Gironde party.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Jacobin Administration—War with the Emperor—The Austrian Committee revived—Memoirs of Madame de la Motte—The King's Household Troops reduced—Seditious Scenes in the Gardens of the Tuilleries—Divisions in the Council—Decree for an Army of Twenty Thousand Men—Views of the Jacobins—Observations of Camille Desmoulins—King negatives the Decrees—Roland dismissed—Dumourier resigns—M. La Fayette writes to the National Assembly—Appears at the Bar—A project for the Escape of the Royal Family—Reflections on the Behaviour of the King, Queen, and Princess Elizabeth.

On the dissolution of this administration, the king was advised by M. Cahier de Gerville to form an administration of a popular nature, as the best means of acquiring the confidence of the nation, and of precluding those marks of jealousy and ill-humour that were shewn against all his measures. M. Dumourier, the same who has since rendered himself so famous, was appointed minister for foreign affairs; M. La Coste for the marine; M. Duranton minister of justice; and a short time after M. Roland, a man of a grave character and republican principles, who had formerly been inspector of commerce and manufactures, was named minister for the interior; M. Claviere of Geneva, a person celebrated for his knowledge in finance, minister of contribution; and M. Degraves, a man of a mild and diffident character, and in a weakly state of health, succeeded M. de Narbonne as minister of war. This was called the Jacobin administration; although Lacoste, Duranton, and Degraves never had been of that society, and the other three within a very short time were more obnoxious to the Jacobins than any men in France.

The assembling of emigrants on the frontiers of France, particularly in the Austrian Netherlands, the countenance given to them by foreign princes, the proclamations issued by the king's brothers, and a variety of other cir-

cumstances, had long rendered it probable, notwithstanding the pacific declarations of the emperor Leopold, that an attack was intended upon France.

In the disordered state of that country, it is natural to imagine that war would have been considered as an additional evil, and to be avoided with the utmost care. It has been believed, however, that it was not viewed in that light by the republicans; but rather as a means of accomplishing their favourite object. Brissot in his journal insinuates as much.—'Sans la guerre,' he says, 'la France ne seroit pas république;' but the journal alluded to appeared immediately after the republic had been declared by the convention, when the highest merit the party could claim was that of having contributed to it. But however ardently they may have wished for war, they had no need of using any address to have it declared; for the young prince who succeeded his uncle Leopold soon settled that point by the answer he ordered to be made to the requisitions of M. de Noailles, the French ambassador at the court of Vienna, and by him transmitted to M. Dumourier. This answer imported that the only terms on which peace could be continued were, 'that the French monarchy should be restablished, according to the plan proposed at the royal sessions at Versailles in June 1789, which exacted the restoration of the nobility and clergy as orders, the restoration of the lands of the church, the guarantee of the feudal rights of the German princes in Alsace, and the restitution of Avignon and the county of Venaissin to the pope.' Dumourier, who considered this answer as equivalent to a declaration of war, prevailed on the king to communicate it directly to the national assembly, where, as was foreseen, it excited the utmost indignation; and on the 20th of April the king, accompanied by his council, went to the assembly and proposed that war should be declared against the king of Hungary and Bohemia. The proposal was heard with universal applause, and decreed by the assembly with unanimity.

The first military operations of the French, however,

tended to confirm an opinion pronounced with an air of triumphant infallibility by many, that the disciplined army of Austria would drive the militia of France before them like a flock of sheep to the capital, that the old despotism would be restored with awful splendour, and the emperor rewarded for his services by the acquisition of Alsace and Lorraine This has not exactly taken place; but the events of the war have produced an effect which nobody foresaw, but which seems equally alarming—the inhabitants of a populous and extensive country, from being the best tailors, hair-dressers, cooks, and dancing-masters in Eurupe, and equal to most as manufacturers and men of letters, have suddenly been converted into soldiers, nothing inferior to the most warlike of their neighbours. This has at length induced many of their ancient rivals, in spite of every sentiment of jealousy, heartily to wish, for the tranquillity of all concerned, that the French were reinstated in their former superiority as dancing-masters, hair-dressers, &c.

Notwithstanding the applause with which the king's proposal of war was received, yet the formation of the new administration did not produce the effect which Cahier de Gerville expected. The king had enemies who were vexed with every measure which tended to render him popular, and used every means to counteract their effect.

The king's circumspection in adapting his conduct to the forms of the constitution, the popularity which he had acquired by proposing the declaration of war, alarmed them so much, that they thought it necessary to revive a tale which had formerly been circulated, and had afterwards been discredited, namely, that a society of persons chosen by the queen frequently met in the apartments of Madame de Lamballe, on purpose to concert measures to assist the emperor in his invasion of France, and to send occasional instructions how to proceed. This was called the Austrian committee; and it was imagined that it would raise a greater indignation, and on that very ac-

count be more eagerly believed, now when the emperor was at war with France, than formerly. The journals therefore began again to be filled with accounts of this dreadful committee; harangues against it were made nightly in the Jacobin club, and it became the chief theme of the orators in the Palais Royal. These manœuvres produced the desired effect upon all who take repeated assertion for proof; but as many remained incredulous, it was thought necessary to fabricate something which should have the appearance of more substantial evidence for them, and some devices were used of a very perfidious nature.*

* One instance of this is so remarkable in its circumstances as to be worth mentioning. A person of the name of Richet de Cerisi came to Renaut de St. Jean d'Angeli, member of the constituent assembly, and at that time editor of the Journal de Paris, and delivered to him a message in the name of Madame de Lamballe, desiring him to come on the following Friday to her apartments, as he had been elected a member of the committee, and that he would there find his friends M. Malouet, and also Messrs. Bertrand and Montmorin. Renaut being flattered with the invitation, of the genuineness of which he had not the least doubt, called on M. Malouet, and expressed satisfaction in the opportunities he would have of meeting him at the committee at Madame de Lamballe's. This drew to an explanation. M. Malouet assured Renaut that he was played upon; that as for his own part he was a member of no committee, and that he had not the honour of being at all acquainted with Madame de Lamballe. M. Malouet informed M. Bertrand of this; who immediately sent a message to Madame de Lamballe, then in this country, desiring to know if she was acquainted with Richet de Cerisi, &c. Madame de Lamballe returned for answer, that she knew no such man, had sent no such message, and that no committee had ever met in her apartments.

At this very time two fellows had been haranguing in the gardens of the Palais Royal against the Austrian committee; but had not so fully engrossed the attention of their auditors, as to prevent their being detected in the act of picking pockets in the heat of their oration. They were carried before a magistrate; and on a strict examination, a patent of affiliation as members of the Jacobin society was found on each, and it appeared that both had been marked with an iron on the shoulder as thieves.

On the evening before those two fellows were taken up, Carra in the Jacobin club denounced M. Bertrand and M. Montmorin as leading members in the Austrian committee; on which M. Bertrand instituted a process

In the meantime an occurrence happened which produced an extraordinary fermentation in the minds of the people, and even of the deputies; of which advantage being taken by the king's enemies, it had an effect with which it might naturally have been thought to have no connection.

A large edition of the memoirs of Madame de la Motte had been bought long before by the direction of government, and was locked up in a room of M. la Porte's house in the Louvre. He was at that time intendent de la liste civile, and from the hurry of affairs had neglected to destroy this work until the 30th of May 1792, when he made them be carefully packed up in a couple of waggons, and carried to the manufactory at Seves, where they

cess against Carra, who when brought before the judge declared that he had made that denunciation on the authority of Merlin of Thionville, Bazire, and Chabot the capuchin. Richet de Cerisi absconded. M. Bertrand published a memorial against Carra and his informers, in which the episode of the two branded thieves who were members of the Jacobin club made a conspicuous figure, to the great mortification of the Jacobins, and of all those who been zealous in asserting the existence of the dreaded Austrian committee; all evidence of which vanished on investigation, as the misshapen phantoms of fear vanish from the eyes of the bewildered traveller at the light of the morning. It would have been fortunate if the affair had ended here; but M. Lariviere, the judge before whom M. Bertrand's complaint had been carried, being filled with indignation against Merlin, Bazire, and Chabot, imprudently ordered them to be arrested. They immediately complained to the legislative assembly, of which they were members. The assembly, more affected with the insult offered to three of their own members, than with the falsehood which they had propagated, decreed that Lariviere should be sent prisoner to Orleans, to be tried by the high tribunal there. The unhappy man was afterwards massacred at Versailles, with the other prisoners. No farther notice was taken of Merlin, Bazire, and Chabot, except in the following lines, which were often repeated at the time, and were thought to be more distinguished for the truth than the wit they contain.—

Connoissez-vous rien de plus sot
Que Merlin, Bazire, et Chabot?
A-t-on vu rien de plus coquin
Que Chabot, Bazire, et Merlin
Non: il n'existe rien de pire
Que Merlin, Chabot, et Bazire.

were burned; but during the execution of this, as the spectators were prevented from satisfying the curiosity which they expressed to examine what the piles of paper were, which they beheld in this mysterious manner committed to the flames, some of them concluded that they could be no other than the registers of the famous Austrian committee of which they had heard so much, but of whose existence no trace had ever been discovered before. This sagacious inference was no sooner made than the news was spread, that the records of the horrid Austrian committee had been burned at Seves; and within a few hours the street orators of Paris repeated to the groups assembled in the public places the contents of some of those bloody records, which they pretended to have learned from persons who had read them, in spite of the care taken to prevent it. Those who had ever expressed a doubt of the existence of an Austrian committee in the castle of the Tuilleries were treated as miscreants. The news was brought to the national assembly, where it excited the most violent agitation and heat; in the midst of which a member who watched an opportunity for obtaining a decree against the constitutional household troops, thought the present rage against the court would answer the purpose as well as any accusation against the troops themselves. He therefore proposed that they should be immediately reduced, and that the duke of Brissac their commander, who in all probability was a member of the Austrian committee, and possibly was privy to the burning of the records, should be sent prisoner to Orleans.

The next day M. de la Porte appeared at the bar, and gave the most convincing evidence that the papers burned at Seves were the memoirs of Madame de la Motte, and that no other paper or record of any kind had been destroyed on that occasion. But these false rumours had produced the effects which their fabricators wished; and the effects continued after their falsehood and the infamy of their authors were made manifest. The constitutional

household troops were not re-established; and new sources of calumny against the king and queen were opened with more efficacy than ever.

In former administrations, but particularly in that immediately preceding the present, means had been used and considerable sums expended in engaging agents in the tribunes of the assembly, in the coffeehouses, and among the circles, to support the measures of the court. Various journals were retained, and pamphlets frequently appeared for the same purpose. All this in some degree counterbalanced the unremitting efforts of the Jacobins. This counteraction being now suppressed, the torrent of calumny flowed with new force; and the administration which the king had been advised to form, on purpose to render him popular, only contributed to make the designs of his enemies more dangerous, and their agents more daring. The seditious and disgusting scenes which had been long exhibited in the Palais Royal, were now extended to the garden of the Tuilleries. The eyes of the royal family were often shocked with the sight of men dragged about by the mob, or ducked in the canal immediately before the front of the palace, on an accusation of aristocracy. The queen could not appear at the windows without danger of insult from the gestures or language of some of the people beneath. Whatever declarations she may have made against promoting any plan of counter-revolution, or of strengthening the king's mind in his resolution of conforming to the present system, it is impossible to imagine that she did not abhor it in her heart; and unfortunately it was not always in her power to prevent strong indications of that abhorrence from appearing in her words and behaviour, not only in the presence of her friends but also in that of her enemies—all of which were carefully retailed with exaggeration, commented upon in clubs, and published in pamphlets.

The two leading men in the present administration were of such opposite characters, that there was no probability of their acting long in agreement together. Dumourier

was a soldier of fortune, of an ambitious and enterprising mind, who undoubtedly preferred the new constitution to the old government, but whose most ardent desire was to obtain situations in which the abilities he was conscious of possessing might be brought into extensive action. Roland was a man of rigid morals, a stern republican, and somewhat of a pedant. Of these two ministers the least disagreeable to the court was the former. M. Lacoste and M. de Grave were attached to him; but when M. de Grave was under the necessity, on account of ill health, to resign, M. Servan, a colonel in the army, and author of a book entitled 'Soldat Citoyen,' was appointed his successor. As M. Duranton was peculiarly attached to neither party, and the new minister with Claviere was entirely devoted to Roland, the latter now acquired a preponderance in the council; and being at the same time supported in the national assembly by the Gironde faction, in the municipality and among the populace by Petion now mayor of Paris, Manuel procureur of the commune, and other avowed republicans, his influence seemed almost irresistible. A difference of opinion had existed among the council since the beginning of this administration; but after the nomination of Servan, animosities were more fierce and frequent.

As the king always employed a priest who had not taken the oaths to the constitution, this circumstance had been often mentioned in the clubs and by the street orators as a proof of his aversion to it: it was proposed that the six ministers should address the king to dismiss his present confessor, and employ one who had taken the oaths. Dumourier opposed this as persecuting and absurd. Lacoste and Duranton were of the same opinion; and no such address was made. The king, when he heard of this attempt, said that he had given proofs of being able to make great sacrifices; and, if he should be pressed to act contrary to his conscience in religious points, he could sacrifice his life also.

The two parties which divided the assembly at this pe-

riod were that of the Gironde, strengthened and supported as has been mentioned, and that called Feuillans, which consisted of those deputies in the assembly who wished to preserve the monarchy according to the constitution, and was supported without doors by many of the principal members of the late constituent assembly, and other persons of character and weight, particularly by M. La Fayette, who commanded one of the armies on the frontiers. It was also supposed that a great majority of the Parisian national guards adhered to the principles of the Feuillans. This last circumstance probably was the cause of a letter which Servan wrote to the president of the national assembly proposing a decree for assembling an army of 20,000 in the neighbourhood of Paris, to be levied from all the different departments, and to rendezvous at the capital on the 14th of July, the day of the celebration of the confederation.

The pretext for this was the protection of the capital. The real motive was to support that controul which Roland and the Girondists had acquired and wished to maintain over the court. Servan was severely reproached in the council by Dumourier and M. Lacoste for this step, which there can be little doubt of his having taken with the approbation of Roland and Claviere. The decree was warmly opposed in the assembly by the whole party of the Feuillans, and all the men of moderation who were devoted to no party, but who saw the danger of assembling 20,000 undisciplined troops at the capital, and who considered this danger as the greater, because it was promoted by the Jacobins of Paris. It was indeed obvious that this club, by their influence with the corresponding societies in all the departments of France, would be able to have the whole body of the officers composed of Jacobins; and that when this army should arrive near Paris, they would be under the direction of those who had the government of the club of Jacobins there, particularly of Danton, who having returned from Marseilles had resumed his influence among them; and of Robespierre,

who had been cultivating them with equal address and assiduity ever since the dissolution of the constituent assembly. Representations of this nature were made to some of the leading members of the Gironde; and it was even foretold that those two men would finally establish their power on the ruins not only of the Feuillans but of the Girondists. Condorcet, Brissot, and others of that party, were too much of philosophers to believe in prophecies, and at the same time so eager to bring down the power of the king, that they overlooked a greater danger which threatened them more nearly: like the man who, while he was intently aiming at an eagle in the air, received a mortal bite from an adder at his feet.

Moralists need not be surprised that precept, however eloquently conveyed, should be ineffectual in turning men from enterprises to which they are prompted by their passions, when they find how often even example fails. Nothing perhaps ever more illustrated the small impression which repeated example makes on the minds of men bent upon a favourite object, than the successive fates which have attended many of the chief promoters of the French revolution.*

* Camille Desmoulins, in a speech delivered in the Jacobin club about the beginning of May 1793, observed, 'that the abbé Maury the royalist was vanquished by Mounier and his two houses of parliament; Mounier and his two houses by Mirabeau with his absolute negative; Mirabeau's absolute negative by the suspensive veto of Barnave; the veto of Barnave by Brissot, who would admit of no other negative but that of himself and his friends. All these rogues,' he continues to observe, 'were swept by each other from the Jacobins, to make room for Danton and Robespierre, the founders of the indivisible republic.'

He then concludes, in a style peculiar to himself—'Thus Necker, Orleans, La Fayette, Mirabeau, Bailly, Duport, Lameth, Guadet, Gensonne, Petion, Brissot, have been the impure vases from which, in the mould of the Jacobin club, has been cast the golden statue of the republic, after the example of that curate who made his silver image of the virgin out of melted chamber-pots.'

But Camille Desmoulins little thought, when he spoke in this light manner at the Jacobin's, that he and his friend Danton were in a very short time to be melted in the same mould; nor did Robespierre suspect, when he sacrificed Danton who was his chief protector at the time of

Although Dumourier disapproved highly of the proposal of the levies from the departments to form an army at the capital, and used his influence in the assembly to prevent the decree from passing; yet when it had passed, and when he saw the joy it occasioned in the capital, he advised the king to sanction both this decree and that against the clergy. All the difficulty and danger of his situation could not prevail upon him to adopt this measure. He negatived both. This was no sooner known than fresh torrents of calumny and abuse were poured from the Jacobin reservoir against the king, against all the different races of kings that have governed France since the beginning of the monarchy. Every means were used to inflame the people and terrify the court. Addresses were read at the bar from different descriptions of citizens, thanking the assembly for the two wise decrees which had been rejected *by the influence of evil counsellors over the mind of the king.* Processions of men armed with pikes marched from the suburbs, with petitions to the assembly to persevere until the sanction of both decrees should be obtained. Roland wrote a letter of remonstrance to the king on his past conduct, insisting on the necessity of removing the veto from the two decrees, and insinuating that the greatest and most imminent danger would attend any farther delay. 'Déjà l'opinion compromet les intentions de votre majesté; encore quelque délai, et le peuple contristé verra dans son roi l'ami et le complice des conspirateurs.'*

The addressers from the suburbs who marched with brandished pikes to the assembly, had not a more threatening aspect than this letter. It was more than the forbearance even of Lewis XVI could support. Roland,

Louvet's accusation, and Camille for whom he had always professed the warmest friendship, that he himself should so soon fall by those who at that period trembled under his tyranny.

* Already has public opinion thrown suspicion on your majesty's intention. If there should be any further delay in sanctioning the two decrees, the vexed people will look on their king as the friend and accomplice of the conspirators.

with Claviere and Servan, was dismissed from the ministry. The former immediately took a measure still more unjustifiable than writing the letter: he read it to the national assembly, who ordered it to be printed, and transmitted to the eighty-three departments, declaring at the same time that he and his two colleagues carried with them the regret of the nation. The flame which this kindled against the king and the clergy who refused to take the oaths was excessive; and if the letter was written less with a view to warn the king of an imminent danger than of having it published on purpose to produce the effect it did produce, which is the opinion of many, the conduct of Roland in this instance was unpardonable.

Dumourier was now appointed minister of war; M. Mourgues, a Protestant clergyman, by his recommendation was appointed to succeed Roland; M. Naillac, at that time envoy from France at the court of Deux Ponts, was named minister for foreign affairs; and the king proposed M. de Vergennes, nephew to the deceased minister of that name, for the finance; but he declined the office, which remained for some time vacant.

Dumourier was considered as the first minister; and it required all the courage he possessed to determine him to accept of so perilous a situation. The majority of the assembly and the public in general were full of indignation on account of the dismission of Roland. Dumourier had given notice that he was to read to the assembly a memorial respecting the war. The galleries were crowded on the morning of the 14th June, when Dumourier entered the assembly. He had been hissed by the populace without, as he passed through them. The tribunes resounded with the noise of disapprobation when he entered the hall. He was often interrupted by clamour, as he read his memorial. The determined intrepidity of his look and manner kept the rage of his enemies in some check. Having signed his memorial, and placed it on the bar, he retired without farther insult. He again represented to the king the necessity of yielding to a torrent

which threatened to overwhelm him and his family, if he attempted any longer to oppose it. The king, it has been thought, suspected that Dumourier wanted to terrify him into this measure, with a view that he himself might regain the favour of the Jacobins. Whatever may be in that conjecture, the king steadily rejected the proposal. Dumourier resigned. His example was followed by the other ministers. Messrs. Lacoste and Duranton were afterwards persuaded to remain, and form part of a new administration; but the latter, having soon after carried to the assembly the king's veto to the obnoxious decrees, was so terrified with his reception on that occasion, that he again delivered his resignation, and retired to the country.

M. La Fayette was on the worst terms at this period with the Jacobins, with Roland, and the whole party of the Gironde. This was also the case with Dumourier. A jealousy at the same time subsisted between the latter and M. La Fayette. It might have been expected that a common danger from a formidable enemy would have reconciled those two men to each other. Their mutual interest clearly pointed out this measure. The more sedate character of Englishmen generally inclines them to sacrifice their passions, that of hatred at least, to what they consider as their interest. Innumerable instances in the course of this revolution tend to prove that no consideration of interest, not even the view of impending ruin, can controul the fierce animosities of the French. It was the opinion of some, that a cordial junction of La Fayette with Dumourier, supported by the Feuillans and other friends of the constitution, would have been the means of preserving it. Nothing can be more evident now, than that their continued enmity and discord greatly contributed to the ruin of the constitution, of the royal family, and of the two generals themselves.

When the king persevered in his veto to the two decrees, he must have relied for support on the Feuillans and on M. La Fayette. But he over-rated their power,

He had been accustomed to see those men who were now at the head of the Feuillant party carry every point; but it was when they were striving not to re-establish order, but to overset a government.* The Gironde party now had the same advantage over the Feuillans that the latter formerly had over the Mouniers, the Lally Tolendals, the Malouets, and what Robespierre and Danton acquired over the Gironde as soon as Roland and Brissot began to preach respect for the laws, and the restoration of order. The king seems to have overlooked this distinction when he relied on the support of the Feuillans, and on M. La Fayette. The latter fell into an error of as great importance, by addressing a long letter from the camp of Maubeuge to the national assembly, complaining of the conduct of the Jacobin society at Paris, and imputing the dangers and calamities of the country to that society and its branches, which molested every department, particularly by insulting the constitutional power of the king, which was one of the chief pillars of law and of liberty. This was accompanied with a letter to the king, encouraging him to persist in supporting that authority which the nation had delegated to him, and assuring him of the support of all the true friends of freedom and all the most respectable citizens. The first part of this advice was observed by the king as much as was possible in his situation; but the assurances given by M. La Fayette failed in a deplorable degree.

When M. La Fayette's letter was read in the assembly, M. Vergniaux represented that the remonstrances of a general at the head of an army to the assem-

* It is much easier to lead the populace of any country into disorders of any kind, than to bring them back to order and respect for law; because the populace of all countries have a natural taste for noise and riot. Whether the outcry is *Vive le Roi*, or *A bas le veto*; when marrow-bones and cleavers are most noisy, when tallow-chandlers bellow the loudest for illuminations, the real source of the commotion is often mistaken.

Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?
Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?
Loves of his own and raptures swell the note,

bly had the appearance of an attempt to overawe the legislature. Guadet said ironically, that the letter was so much in the style of Cromwell, that it could not possibly be written by M. La Fayette. The Jacobins were quite outrageous against the general, whom they compared to Cromwell, and proposed that he should be arrested and sent to Orleans as a traitor; they themselves and their agents in the meantime were exciting the populace to insurrection, and at last they brought on the shameful transactions of the 20th of June, of which we have given a particular account elsewhere.*

When M. de la Fayette heard of the outrages of that day, he set out for the capital. The news of his arrival gave satisfaction to all the lovers of order and of the constitution, and struck the Jacobins with alarm. His letter to the assembly fully expressed his sentiments respecting their general conduct; every body knew that it had been more atrocious since his letter than it had been before; nobody doubted therefore but that his errand to Paris was to bring the authors of that insurrection to punishment, which it was evident the majority of the assembly had no inclination to do; and it was of course believed either that his army was in full march after him, or that he was assured of such support in the capital itself as would enable him to accomplish his purpose. The king and the court were of this opinion. M. La Fayette appeared alone at the bar of the national assembly; this circumstance strengthened the general conjecture that he was conscious of being supported. In his address to the assembly he began by avowing the letter he had written to them; and in the name of the army and of all good citizens he demanded 'the punishment of the instigators and executors of the violences of the 20th, the suppression of the Jacobin societies, and that the assembly would take measures for preventing all attempts against the constitution from internal enemies, while the army was repelling foreign foes from the frontiers.'

* Vide a Journal during a Residence in France, &c. vol. iii, October 22, 1792.

The assembly remained for some time in silent consternation. The joy that M. de la Fayette's arrival had given to the court, and some attentions shewn him by the national guards, still impressed many of the deputies with the notion of his having a strong support within the city of Paris. Guadet dispelled their fears by the briskness of his attack; he inveighed against the general for leaving the army, and desired that the minister of war might be questioned whether he had asked and obtained leave. This produced a debate; and several severe speeches were made by those who would have remained overawed, had not Gaudet begun in the bold manner he did. And although it was carried at last that no immediate censure should be passed upon him, yet it tended to disconcert M. La Fayette very greatly. And such was the activity of the Jacobins among the populace, that the general's friends advised him to return to his army, as the only means of preventing his being arrested. There is every reason to believe that the intentions of M. La Fayette were good, but his conduct on this occasion certainly was ill advised. For an individual to exact any thing of a body of men such as the national assembly, without having the power of controlling them, is ridiculous; and to imagine that his presence, without the certainty of being followed by his army, would have a better effect than his letter, was equally so.

The festival of the confederation was now at hand; it was celebrated on the 14th of July on the same ground, but with fewer ceremonies than the former; the priests in particular were less numerous, and some of the religious ceremonies were entirely omitted. The king and all the royal family were present. The populace, being left to their natural emotions, made some reparation for the outrages of the 20th of June; the shouts of *Vive le Roi!* extinguished every attempt that was made of an insulting nature.

This redoubled the diligence of the Jacobin and Gironde parties; they brought forward all their old means,

and invented new ones to prejudice the public against the king. La Fayette's letter was represented in the journals as high treason against the nation. He was called a liberticide, and a second Cromwell; with this difference, that he acted in concert with the king against the liberty of the people; and he was accused of having proposed to march with his army against Paris. A considerable body of federates, as they are called, arrived from different departments; those from Marseilles were a set of the most desperate fellows on earth, and had been chosen on that account. They committed many disorders in their march to Paris; and were entirely under the direction of determined republicans. Another procession from the suburbs of St. Antoine to the Tuilleries was now openly spoken of, with a view to oblige the king to remove his veto from the two famous decrees, and to depose him in case he should refuse: the Jacobins in general were for the last measure, without the alternative.

The king's friends were more alarmed than ever for his safety, and that of the royal family. Another attempt to escape from the capital, and out of the reach of his enemies, was thought necessary at any risk. The following plan for that purpose was formed by a person faithfully attached to the king, and who had held a high office under the constitution.—The king and royal family were to go to Gaillon, a villa belonging to the archbishop of Rouen, situated within three leagues of that city, and twenty leagues from Paris, the precise distance allowed by the constitution. They were to go out of the Tuilleries through the hotel of the intendant of the civil list, the communication of which with the palace was only separated by a wooden partition easily removed, and guarded by a single sentinel, who was to be secured. The principal entry to this hotel was from the court of the Old Louvre, where two or three coaches were usually seen about eleven or twelve at night, belonging to those who supped with the intendant. On the night designed for the king's

escape nobody was to be invited; but two common coaches were to be ready for the reception of the royal family, with no attendant except one maid, and two confidential persons dressed like footmen, one behind each carriage. They were to go out of Paris at the usual hour that those who lived in the neighbourhood and supped in town returned to their houses. The three thousand Swiss whom the king had been obliged by a decree to send out of the capital, were to be distributed at different stations on the road from Paris to Pontoise. The king's horse guards, who had been lately reduced, and still resided in the capital, the gallant Count d'Hervilly, their former commander, to whom they were greatly attached, engaged to have all ready at twelve hours previous notice. Their horses were in the stables at Versailles, which they were to have broken into on the night appointed, and to have met the king within a league of Paris, and accompanied him to Pontoise, where they were sure of finding two regiments of Swiss, which with the three thousand above mentioned, and the six hundred horse guards under d'Hervilly, would have formed a body of troops sufficient for the protection of the royal family for some time at least. The king was to have wrote from Gaillon to the assembly, to inform them of the motives of his departure; and if they should have marched an army to attack him, he was to have removed to Fecamp on the sea-coast, where the commissary of the marine would have ordered a vessel for the reception of the royal family, to be entirely at the king's disposal, and to transport them wherever he should direct. M. le Fort, an intelligent general officer, had set out from Paris at the end of July for Normandy, on purpose to examine Gaillon, its environs, and the coast; and to sound the disposition of the inhabitants. He returned on the 5th of August with a report favourable for the enterprise. The departure of the royal family was to have taken place on the night of the 7th of August; every thing was in great forwardness for the execution: the utmost secrecy had been preserved; but the queen, independent of the im-

pression which the ill success of their former attempt had made on her mind, felt an additional repugnance to the enterprise, because the commanding officer of the troops in Normandy was a constitutional deputy. And although there was no doubt of that nobleman's zeal in protecting the royal family on the present occasion, and of his desire to support the constitution against the Jacobins and Girondists, yet the circumstance above mentioned rendered her more and more averse to the scheme, as the moment of its execution drew nearer. On the evening of the 6th, she prevailed on the king to send a message to the person who had the chief direction of the enterprise to suspend his preparations, because her majesty thought the measure should not be adopted until the last extremity—little imagining, unfortunate princess! that the last extremity was already arrived, and that she would never have another opportunity.*

It was imagined that the inevitable consequence of the king's escape would have been involving the nation in a civil war and other calamities. But what calamities could have been greater than those which have actually taken place? Every person of common humanity in Europe, therefore, whatever may be their sentiments respecting the French revolution in other respects, will lament that the escape of the royal family of France was not effected at this time. Above all, France herself has cause to lament it, as it would have saved her from the deepest stigma that ever was fixed on a nation.

Is the rejection of this plan of escape to be considered now as unfortunate for the three persons who were most interested in its success at the time and have been since

* So unconscious was the queen of her danger, and of the horrors that awaited her, that three days after that which had been fixed on for the escape, when she and the rest of the royal family were seated in the box at the national assembly, on the fatal 10th of August, immediately before the firing began, she said to M. d'Hervilly, 'Eh bien! M. d'Hervilly, n'avons nous pas bien fait de ne pas partir?' To which that gentleman answered, 'Je souhaite, madame, que votre majesté me fasse la même question dans six mois d'ici.'

cut off—one of them by a sentence directly in opposition to the constitution adopted and sworn to by his judges—the other two by the most wanton, unmanly, and detestable exercise of tyranny, that ever revolted the soul of humanity.

The murder of the queen and princess seems so completely without provocation, view of interest, or meaning, as would almost tempt us to think that men may by a diabolical perversion of nature, from habitual crimes come at last to love wickedness for its own sake, and find in vice its own reward.

That those three eminent persons failed in accomplishing their escape, will assuredly not be thought unfortunate for their fame in this world; and it is devoutly to be believed that it will contribute to their everlasting reward in the next.

Had they completed their escape, the king would not have had an opportunity of displaying that firmness of mind and reach of understanding which appeared on his trial; nor would he in his last will have had occasion to exhibit a degree of Christian resignation which equals, and a delicacy and tenderness of sentiment which surpasses, any thing recorded of the most celebrated martyrs of the Roman church.

And the queen would have had no opportunity of exhibiting that undisturbed circumspection and presence of mind discernible in her answers to the most captious and insidious interrogatories; particularly when, on the judge expressing surprise at her not knowing a person to whom she had rendered great services, she calmly replied, 'It is possible for those who confer favours to forget them; while those on whom they are conferred find it *impossible*.' And also, when having disdained to take any notice of a brutal charge which was brought against her, on its being repeated she repelled the monstrous accusation by an appeal to human nature, as it exists in the hearts of mothers. Indeed, the whole of her conduct from the moment of her confinement tends to render many of those

tales which slander circulated to her prejudice with such avidity, absolutely incredible; and the attachment, the affection, the fidelity and dignity, which in the most trying scenes she manifested to her husband, her children, her friends, and her enemies, throw back a lustre on the imperial line from which she sprung, brighter than that which she derived from it.

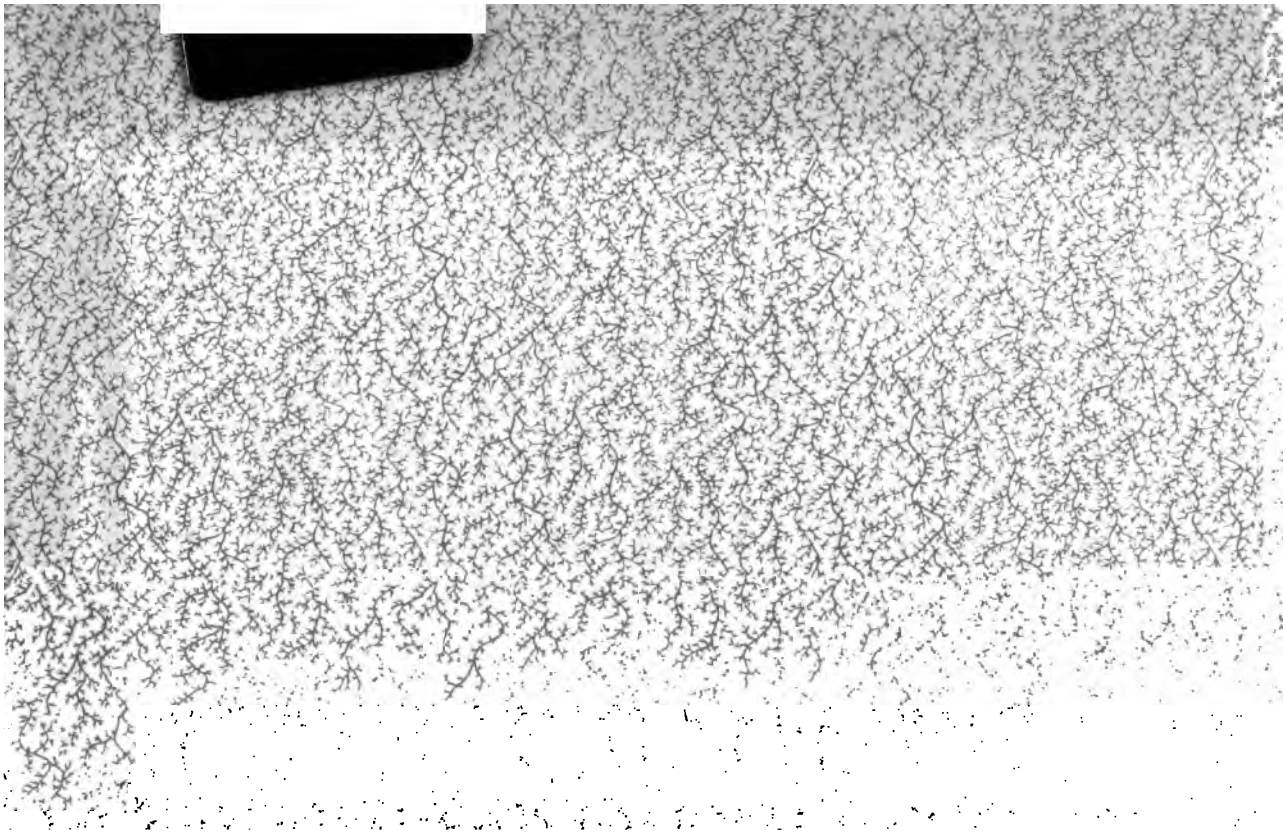
This cruel arrest likewise afforded the princess Elizabeth the means of proving before a tribunal of atheists what a degree of composure religion can communicate to a mind naturally timid, and to what elevation it can raise a mind naturally unassuming. Disdaining any concession which might soften their cruelty, and despising the wrath which she knew her answer would excite, to the first interrogatory of the court, What is your name? she greatly replied, '*My name is Elizabeth of France, sister to the monarch you murdered, and aunt to your present king.*'

Those and other scenes of unparalleled cruelty were acted under the influence or during the usurpation of Robespierre.

Thus the French people, having obtained a limited monarchical constitution, under which, with the timely alterations and reforms that experience would have indicated and new circumstances rendered expedient, the nation might have been prosperous and happy, had they not with equal levity and guilt overthrown it almost without a trial.

The French revolution exhibits at once the mischiefs that attend the abuse of power and those that attend the abuse of liberty; affording a warning to sovereigns, not only against direct acts of cruelty, but also against that lavishness of the public money which necessarily leads to the oppression of the people, and raises general discontent and indignation. It affords likewise a warning to the subjects of every free government against all licentious disregard of law, all attack on the rights of any class of

their fellow-citizens, or the ascertained prerogatives of the sovereign; as every unprovoked attack of that nature tends to render all men's rights insecure, leads to the horrors of anarchy, and generally terminates in the destruction of that liberty they wish to preserve.

END OF VOL. IV.

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